



NATIONAL LINK COALITION

Working together to stop violence against people and animals

The LINK-Letter Vol. 6, No. 8 August 2013

A monthly report of news from THE NATIONAL RESOURCE CENTER

ON THE LINK BETWEEN ANIMAL ABUSE AND HUMAN VIOLENCE



www.nationallinkcoalition.org



[Phil Arkow](#), Editor



U.S. Department of Justice Recognizing The Link

The U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Justice Programs Diagnostic Center has given The Link an important boost with law enforcement and court personnel nationwide with the publication of a web [blog](#) on "The Implications and Risks of Animal Cruelty, and How the Criminal Justice Community Can Help."



Sherry Ramsey (and Maybelle)

The Center invited Sherry Ramsey, Director of Animal Cruelty Prosecutions for the Humane Society of the U.S., to author the article. The Center's purpose is to seek data-driven crime solutions.

Ramsey recognized that animal cruelty may not be a top priority for law enforcement and court systems facing shrinking budgets and increasing caseloads, but noted considerable empirical evidence indicating that violence against animals should be taken seriously. This research can be typed by four major questions:

- The relationship between engaging in cruelty and other violent or criminal behavior
- The relationship between observing animal cruelty and the risk for later violent or criminal behavior
- Types of animal cruelty that are predictive of violent or delinquent behavior that could be interrupted with early identification
- Links between animal fighting and other criminal enterprises

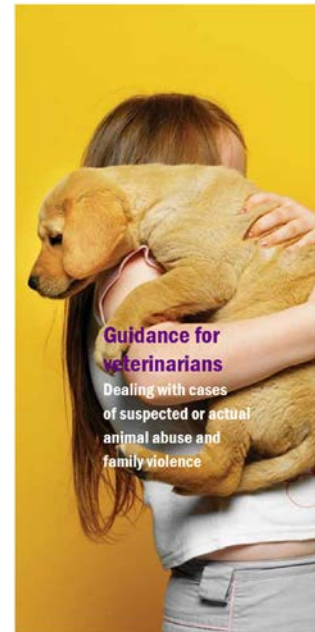
In light of the research, "Committing additional resources to better respond to these crimes can help protect families and communities," Ramsey wrote. "Proactively identifying and responding to these risks is one way to prevent future violence."

Earlier this year, the Office of Justice Programs held a historic "listening session" to begin exploring and learning more about the Link between animal abuse and other forms of violence ([See LINK-Letter, May 2013](#)). "It is certainly a great sign to see interest at this level," said Ramsey.

New Guidance Counsels New Zealand Veterinarians on Recognition and Response to Animal, Child, Domestic and Elder Abuse

New Zealand has become the third nation to publish Link-based guidelines for veterinarians who encounter animals where they suspect abuse, cruelty or neglect might be present. The New Zealand Veterinary Council in June published *Guidance for Veterinarians Dealing with Cases of Suspected or Actual Animal Abuse and Family Violence*. Based upon the premise of established correlations between animal abuse, family violence and other forms of community violence, the New Zealand Guidance goes farther than its counterparts in the [U.S.](#) (2011) and [U.K.](#) (2012) in emphasizing the responsibility of veterinarians to respond to suspected child abuse and domestic violence as well.

The Guidance notes that such veterinary responses are challenging, particularly if the violence perpetrated on the animal may also have been used to threaten or intimidate human family members. Although such situations may be encountered only relatively rarely, the Guidance notes that responding to the issue “provides a unique opportunity to assist in reducing violence in New Zealand society.”



The 30-page Guidance is an outgrowth of an earlier *Veterinarians Animal Welfare Toolkit*, which focused on large animals and farm-based cruelty and neglect (See [LINK-Letter November 2012](#)). The new Guidance extends that earlier work to include recognition and response to suspected domestic violence and child and elder abuse.

Emphasizing that it is not up to the veterinarian to establish an offense, but rather to report the case to those who can investigate, the Guidance presents two effective flowcharts depicting systemic responses to suspected animal abuse and human violence.

While such reports are not necessarily mandated, the Guidance argues that veterinarians have professional, ethical and legal duties and a “moral responsibility to act when violence against the vulnerable is recognized or suspected.” Such action will “protect those children or adults who may be being harmed but may be too afraid to speak up for themselves.”

The Guidance addresses confidentiality concerns and situations in which these constraints may be overridden. It provides: telltale clues to help identify animal abuse; definitions and signs of domestic violence, child abuse and elder abuse; and practice management guidelines to help prepare the staff to respond appropriately, to gather evidence, and to deal with suspected family violence.

The Guidance was written to provide veterinarians with a resource that will help create a culture in which such violence becomes “increasingly unacceptable to the community as a whole.”

The Guidance is available as a free download from both the [New Zealand Veterinary Council](#) and the [National Link Coalition’s National Resource Center on The Link between Animal Abuse and Human Violence](#).

Resource Center Website Goes Global with Multilingual Materials



As interest in The Link has grown globally (The *LINK-Letter* now has readers in 35 nations!), it has become increasingly more important to make resource materials available about the connections between animal abuse and human violence in multiple languages. We have added a [new section to our website](#) with translations of our materials, and with original content created in other countries.

The first nine resources include Spanish translations of our Link brochure, two brochures to help veterinarians recognize abuse, and domestic violence pet support posters, created by Spain's [GEVHA](#) Link coalition, to whom we extend *muchas gracias!* Our new São Paulo coalition provided a Portuguese translation of a Link domestic violence fact sheet. *Obrigado!* Our Swedish [Se Sambandet](#) coalition provided two brochures about The Link. *Tack!* And we have two Dutch reports as well. *Dank u!*

We heartily encourage Link advocates working in languages other than English to send us their translations and original materials and we will share them with our growing global audience.

Domestic Violence/Animal Shelter Links Get a Boost Down Under

The [Royal New Zealand SPCA](#), which broke new ground in Link research with its pioneering “Pets as Pawns” study last year (see [LINK-Letter April 2012](#)) is starting a new pilot program that will link the RNZSPCA and four [Women’s Refuge New Zealand](#) sites. A grant was secured to enable the RNZSPCA to fund emergency animal care in times of crisis for Women’s Refuge clients in Waikata, Wairarapa, Wellington and Christchurch, reported Shelley Ryan, RNZSPCA National Education Director. A Memorandum of Understanding will cement the links among the organizations.



WOMEN'S REFUGE®

The pilot program, called Working Together More, also aims to identify numerous factors in sheltering pets of domestic violence survivors. These include: the financial, human resources and facility strains on the SPCA shelters; the number of requests; and the likelihood that families will make a move to safety knowing that their animals are going to be protected as well.

In addition to the Working Together More funding, the RNZSPCA was able to secure funding for the first time to assist local SPCAs across New Zealand who receive requests from human welfare agencies requiring housing for families’ animals in times of crisis, Ryan said.

The 75-page [“Pets as Pawns” report](#) identified batterers’ motivations for animal cruelty during and after their relationship with survivors, and for cruelty directed against friends and family members who helped her escape. The percentages of women reporting animal abuse, delaying leaving home, and of children witnessing animal abuse were consistent with reports from the U.S. and other nations. The study encouraged the development of free, temporary housing for pets and Link training for police.

The Link in the Legislatures

Link Research Affirmed in Legislative Debate

The links between animal abuse and human violence were cited as a rationale for a package of animal welfare bills before the Michigan State Legislature that would require animal shelters to perform criminal background checks on potential adopters.



State Sen. Rick Jones

SB 377 and 378, sponsored by Sen. Steven Bieda, would establish a statewide registry of animal abusers; SB 386, sponsored by Sen. Rick Jones, would require public and private animal shelters to check to see if potential adopters were on the registry. The initial registry bill was too costly and cumbersome for the state to implement, according to the [Detroit Free Press](#).

The bills were among a package of proposals offered by Matt Falk, of Goodells, Mich., who created a group called "[Logan's Law](#)" in response to the death of his Siberian Husky last year at the hands of a perpetrator who has yet to be caught. "These laws need to be taken into consideration because there is a lot of connection between animal and human abuse," Falk said.

The validity of Link research was questioned by Ann Hier of the Michigan Association of Pure Bred Dogs in opposing the bills. However, Jones quickly blew up at Hier's contention, saying, "Your science is junk. I will not listen to your nonsense for another word."

Texas Gearing Up for New Domestic Violence Pet Protection Law

Animal shelters and domestic violence agencies across Texas are preparing to implement the procedures of the Lone Star State's new pet protection order law, enacted in May, 2011 and scheduled to take effect Sept. 1, 2013.

The new law, co-sponsored by state Sen. Wendy Davis (of recent filibuster fame), ensures that domestic violence survivors can seek needed help and shelter without fear that their abuser will harm or take away their pets.



Patt Nordyke

Patt Nordyke, Executive Director of the Texas Federation of Animal Care Societies, told [KETK-TV](#) in Tyler, Texas that "There is a close link between domestic violence and pet abuse. We are thrilled to finally have this as law in Texas. No longer will domestic violence victims need to stay in an abusive situation because they are worried about threats to their pets. It's a law that ensures the safety of both people and animals."

The original bill, which had been introduced four times since 2007 before finally passing in 2011, failed to have an enforcement component that satisfied prosecutors. Recent changes to the bill's language were enacted enabling it to take effect Sept. 1.

Texas is one of [23 states plus Puerto Rico](#) that have enacted pet protection order provisions that enable judges to include pets and/or livestock in protection-from-abuse orders.

Link Research Cited in Call for Last Felony Cruelty Law

Data showing that violent offenders often have histories of cruelty against animals were cited in a Pierre, S. Dak., [Capitol-Journal newspaper article](#) describing South Dakota's status as the only state to lack felony-level provisions for acts of malicious abuse of domestic pets. Despite the defeat of a felony cruelty bill in 2013 – the fifth such defeat in recent years – proponents and opponents of the most recent bill plan to meet in Pierre on Aug. 19 to discuss the issue and resolve concerns over the bill's language.



Animal welfare and control groups, sheriffs, veterinarians, livestock groups, and pet breeders are expected to draft more precise language for a proposed bill for the 2014 legislative session to emphasize the intent of a felony law aimed at egregious acts of cruelty against domestic pets, rather than against accepted livestock industry practices. Both sides agree that incidents of malicious cruelty are not widespread in the state but several dramatic incidents have raised awareness of the issue and of the potential for such acts to escalate against human victims.

Under current South Dakota law, the penalties for destroying a portrait of a dog are more severe than torturing the actual dog, one proponent noted.

Reporting and cross-reporting:



District of Columbia B20-0153 would amend the DC Official Code to incorporate veterinary medicine as a health profession. Under this new classification, veterinarians and veterinary technicians would become mandated reporters of suspected child abuse and neglect.



New York A3766 would require anyone who enforces animal cruelty 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 A3283 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.



Wisconsin SB 199 would require veterinarians to report all suspected animal abuse, with immunity from civil liability for good-faith reporting. Currently they are mandated to report only suspected animal fighting and lack immunity. The bill is in the Judiciary and Labor Committee.

Abusers Registries:



Michigan HB 4535 and **4534** would require individuals convicted of animal cruelty to register for five years with the State Police, who would create a statewide database of offenders. Animal shelters that adopt to individuals on the registry would be guilty of a misdemeanor.



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.

Advocates for Animals



Connecticut HB 5677, HB 6690 and HB 6310 would appoint a State Department of Agriculture veterinarian 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. **HB 6690** has passed the House and is in the Senate Judiciary Committee.

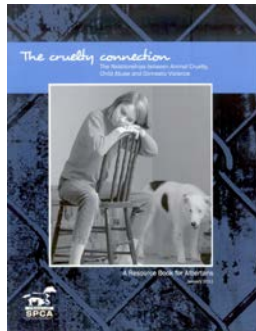
Animal Abuse in the Presence of a Child



New York A706 would include animal cruelty in the presence of a child as an element in endangering a child's welfare, and within the definition of a neglected or maltreated child. It has been referred to the Codes Committee.



Oregon SB6 was signed into law on July 15. The act increases the punishment for animal neglect in the first degree to a maximum of 5 years imprisonment and/or a \$125,000 fine for repeat offenders, offenses involving 10 or more animals, or neglect that occurs in the presence of a minor child.



Crowd-Sourced Voting to Help Fund Domestic Violence Pet Care

In a [2012 study](#), the Alberta SPCA in Canada found that 59% of pet-owning women in emergency shelters delayed leaving the abusive environment out of concern for their pets. In 36% of the cases, animals were threatened by the abuser – and 85% of those threats were carried out. Interviews with victims showed how difficult it can be for women with pets or livestock to leave a violent relationship, and how the animals suffer as an abuser controls the victims by threatening or harming the animals. In addition, children often

witness the animal cruelty – and in half of the situations it was the child's own pet that was threatened or harmed.

The Alberta SPCA is seeking help to get funding for a pilot project to care for pets while their owners are escaping violent situations. The SPCA has applied for a grant from the Field Law Community Fund Program which selects grant recipients, in part, on response to online voting for innovative ideas. Voting ends Aug. 31.

Alberta SPCA Education Director Tim Battle asks Link advocates to assist by going to www.fieldlawcommunityfund.com/ideas/pet-safekeeping-for-domestic-violence-victims/ and clicking on the box in the upper right-hand corner that reads "VOTE FOR US."

Web Site Depicts The Link in Eastern Europe



A new website features graphic video depictions of animal abuse in Bulgaria and Romania, and results of a study exploring the impact of this abuse on children's psychosocial development. The [Making The Link website](#) also features Erik Friedl's classic 23-minute video from Chicago, *Exploding the Cycles of Violence*, and a 16-minute lecture by Phil Tedeschi on



human-animal relationships. The video is a production of the [Romania Animal Hotline](#).

The Link in the Literature

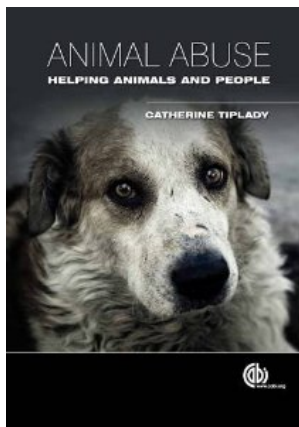
Veterinary Social Work Seen as Bridging Two Professions

Social workers' recognition of the importance of animals in the lives of their clients received a major boost this month with an [article](#) in the National Association of Social Workers' magazine about the recent Veterinary Social Work Summit at the University of Tennessee (see [LINK-Letter, May 2013](#)). The article noted that the university's pioneering certificate program between the Schools of Social Work and Veterinary Medicine originated with Gary Anderson, director of the social work school, a child welfare specialist long interested in the connection between child abuse and animal abuse. Veterinary social work focuses not only on The Link but also grief and pet loss, animal-assisted interactions, and compassion fatigue management in the veterinary and animal shelter fields.



Temple Grandin spoke to the Summit

-- Clayton, L. (2013). *Veterinary social work: Emerging field joins two professions*. *NASW News*, 58(7).



Understanding The Link to Help People and Animals

Catherine Tiplady's long-awaited international compilation on animal abuse and its impact on humans has just been published. *Animal Abuse: Helping Animals and People* features 23 chapters including ones on The Link, veterinary responsibilities in reporting abuse, domestic violence pet support programs, and animal-assisted therapy for abused children. Other chapters, written by a multidisciplinary cadre of authorities, discuss animal cruelty investigation, reporting and prosecution issues, veterinary forensics, historical and cultural reviews of animal abuse, and eight interviews with professionals who work with animal abuse.

-- Tiplady, C. (Ed.). (2013). *Animal Abuse: Helping Animals and People*. Wallingford, Oxfordshire, UK: CAB International. 233 pages.

Lack of Link Awareness Cited in Italian Shelter Study

A study of domestic violence and animal shelters in Italy reported significantly less inter-agency cooperation than has been reported in other nations, which the authors attributed to a lack of awareness about The Link. Only 11% of domestic violence shelters and 13% of animal shelters responding to a survey saw a correlation between domestic violence and animal abuse. Only 10% of battered women reported incidents of animal abuse and 5% said such incidents delayed their leaving abusive situations. Only 6% of animal and women's shelters reported collaborating. The authors cited numerous methodological challenges, cultural differences, and the relative lack of awareness about The Link in Europe as affecting the findings, and called for greater training, operational guidelines and communication to raise Link awareness at the community and professional levels.

-- Bogaerts, S., Ravagnani, L., Ziliani, C., Alemanno, E., et al. (2012). *An Italian pilot investigation on women and animal shelters about a criminal phenomenon*. [Presentation at 14th International Symposium of the World Society of Victimology, The Hague, The Netherlands, May 20-24.](#)

Animal Abuse Linked to Human Crime in Brazil

As part of his studies for a master's degree, [Capt. Marcelo Robis](#) of the Military Police of the State of São Paulo, Brazil, conducted a study of animal cruelty offenders. Of 643 individuals arrested on cruelty charges, 204 had other criminal histories involving a total of 595 crimes. 90% of the cruelty offenders were men, with an average age of 43. 85% of cases involved pets, with 15% involving wildlife. Most of the cruelty cases (62%) occurred in urban communities, which may reflect under-reporting of cruelty incidents in rural areas.



-- Robis, M. (2013). *Maus Tratos aos Animais e Violência Contra as Pessoas.* [Portuguese: *Maltreatment of Animals and Violence Against Persons.*] Sao Paulo, Brazil: Author.

Link Used as Basis for Call for British Animal Abuser Registry



The proclivity of animal abuse offenders to go on to commit serious acts of violence against vulnerable human victims was the basis for an extensive article calling for a Registry of Animal Abusers in the United Kingdom. [Noel C. Sweeney wrote](#) that animal abusers should be considered in the same manner as pederasts and rapists whose offenses are not out of character, but rather part of their character. Sweeney cited several British cases involving The Link.

-- Sweeney, N.C. (2013). *Why we need an animal abuser registry.* *Criminal Law & Justice Weekly, 177*(19).

News from Link Coalitions

The Link – O Elo – Comes to Brazil

Efforts are under way to organize a Link coalition in São Paulo, Brazil, which would be the first such multidisciplinary group in Latin America. National Link Coalition Coordinator Phil Arkow presented two days of training at the inaugural Seminário Internacional: O Elo entre o Abuso Animal e a Violência Humana, held July 30-31 at the veterinary school at the University of Sao Paulo. The conference followed two additional days of Link training at Brazil's national MedVep veterinary association conference in Bento Gonçalves.



The task force of Brazilian Link proponents gathered at the historic Elo conference to consider interdisciplinary ways to diagnose and prevent domestic violence and animal abuse.



A steering committee comprised of physicians, prosecutors, animal welfare and control advocates, and experts in veterinary and shelter medicine, pathology and forensics, was appointed to organize the network. The group will meet again in early September to begin to define goals, objectives and plans. [Rita de Cassia Maria Garcia](#), Secretary of the Brazilian Veterinary Forensics Association [ABMVL](#), is coordinating the effort.

Leaders of the Associação Brasileira de Medicina Veterinária Legal – ABMVL, the Brazilian Veterinary Forensics Association – gathered at the conference. From left, Rita de Cassia Maria Garcia, Mara Rita Massad, and Servio Reis were extremely pleased with the historic meeting's outcomes.

Permission to Reprint

The news items and training opportunities contained in *The LINK-Letter* are intended to disseminate as widely and as freely as possible information about the connections between animal abuse and interpersonal violence. Permission is hereby granted to re-post these articles in other newsletters, websites, magazines, and electronic publications provided that appropriate credit is given to the National Link Coalition and with links to www.nationallinkcoalition.org.

The Link in the News

Man with Abuse History Gets 14 Years for Killing Dog

A Sarasota, Fla. man with a history of battery, burglary and intoxication was sentenced to 14 years in prison and 5 years probation in the brutal tire-iron beating of his friend's mastiff. Kevin Koscielniak, 52, pleaded no contest to six charges against him in the incident, in which surveillance video captured him killing the dog during a 10-minute beating. The dog belonged to John Olaya, who had let Koscielniak pick up scrap metal from his automotive shop; Olaya saw him intoxicated on the premises and asked him to leave. The next day Olaya noticed that the dog was missing, and the surveillance tape showed Koscielniak climbing a barbed-wire fence, breaking into the shop, and bludgeoning the dog to death. Police found blood on cars, walls, a ceiling fan, and on the defendant's clothing. "This was a senseless act of violence indicative of a depraved mind," said Art Jackman, the lead assistant state attorney in the case, the [Herald-Tribune reported](#).



Kevin Koscielniak is escorted into court

Two Dogs Brutally Killed in Domestic Violence Incidents

A Lackland Air Force Base dog handler and dispatcher for San Antonio, Texas Animal Services was served with a permanent protective order on June 5 and arrested and charged with assault on June 18 after his former girlfriend said he allegedly assaulted her and killed their two dogs during domestic disputes. Tracie Sanchez told the court that Gregory Vasquez, 25, threw her five-pound Maltese-poodle mix dog, Sophie, against a wall in December, 2010, and then put the body in the freezer to contain the smell.

One month later, he allegedly beat her for several hours before his own dog, a 45-pound chow mix named Grim, intervened and bit the man on his heel. He stabbed the dog 8-10 times with a butcher knife, she said. She fled the apartment while he dumped Grim's body. She declined to press charges, and said the abuse continued until February, 2013, when she finally left the relationship. The ex-boyfriend is a part-time contracted dispatcher for San Antonio Animal Services, and a civilian employee dog handler for the 341st Military Working Dog Squadron at the air base.

Indiana Man Charged with Child Exploitation and Bestiality

A Fishers, Ind. man has been charged with seven counts of bestiality and child exploitation for allegedly engaging in sexual acts with a dog and coercing his girlfriend to engage in a sexual act with him and their 4-month-old daughter. The *Indianapolis Star* [reported](#) that Luke Pruitt, 21, was arrested after police found child pornography and explicit photos in his computer of him committing bestiality with a dog. Investigators also found numerous text messages sent to the woman attempting to coerce her into bringing the baby into the bedroom initially to observe, and then later to participate in, a sex act.



Luke Pruitt

Link Cited in Arkansas Editorial

An opinion piece published on June 29 in the [Blytheville, Ark. Courier News](#) extensively quotes Phil Arkow, National Link Coalition Coordinator, regarding how animals are often killed and harmed to coerce and control domestic violence survivors into compliance and to maintain an atmosphere of fear. The unnamed writer, apparently affiliated with a group called Mississippi County Animal Rescue, also drew attention to animal hoarding, dogfighting, and the adverse impact such incidents have on children in the family.

Teenager with Animal Cruelty History Indicted for Attempted Murder



Haynes' court appearance

A 19-year-old Middletown, N.J. man with a history of animal abuse who had been arrested on charges of stabbing a woman 12 times while she pushed a child in her baby stroller through a Bed Bath & Beyond store (See [LINK-Letter February, 2013](#)) was formally [indicted by a Monmouth County grand jury](#) on three counts of attempted murder and weapons charges. Authorities said Tyrik Haynes did not know his alleged victim in the Jan. 17 incident. In December 2012 Haynes had been charged with animal cruelty for allegedly torching a cat on Christmas Eve by putting the animal in a crate and using aerosol and matches to set fire to it.

Cat Burned to Death in Arson/Burglary/Theft Case

A Tarentum, Penna. man reportedly upset with his friend for breaking off their relationship has been charged with arson, burglary, criminal mischief, theft and cruelty to animals for allegedly breaking into his friend's house and burning his cat alive. Justin Elliott Bartlett, 21, was charged in the Jan. 21 incident in which the friend, Richard Marvin, told police he found a glass patio door and skylight broken and his cat missing. The cat was found burned to death near a melted cat carrier and an empty gas can. The [Pittsburgh Tribune-Review](#) [reported](#) that Bartlett had confessed to the incident.

Registered Sex Predator Arrested on Bestiality and Cruelty Charges – Twice!



James Lee Lyons

[WAWS-TV](#)

A man convicted in 1998 and sentenced to 13 years in prison for child sex abuse who was released as a registered sex predator has been arrested and charged twice with bestiality and animal cruelty in connection with alleged sexual abuse of his neighbors' dogs.

James Lee Lyons, 52, of St. Johns County, Fla., was arrested on July 26 after the neighbor said he saw Lyons carrying the dog, who had disappeared during a thunderstorm. The dog was acting withdrawn and had injuries around her rectum and vulva. [WAWS-TV](#) reported that Lyons was charged with animal cruelty and sexual activity involving an animal.

Lyons was released after posting \$11,000 a bond that had an additional condition that he have no pets at his home. But on Aug. 1 animal control officers went to his home and confiscated two dogs, one of which had injuries that a [veterinarian called appalling](#). The dogs underwent veterinary care and Lyons' bond was increased to \$61,000.

Man Gets 5 Years in Cat-Killing and Threat Case

Johnen Velez, of Hartford, Conn., who allegedly killed his ex-girlfriend's cat, stuffed it in a pillowcase and left it outside the home of her new lover with a note that read, "You're next!" was sentenced to five years in prison. Velez, 19, pleaded no-contest to a charge of animal cruelty and guilty to third-degree assault in an unrelated case, the [Hartford Courant](#) reported. Prosecutor Anthony Bochiccio said DNA evidence was found linking Velez to the pillowcase and his fingerprints were on the threatening note. Police said Velez and the woman had broke up last September and she wanted to reunite with the other man.



Johnen Velez

Man Charged with Domestic Violence Assault, Animal Cruelty

Police in Gloversville, N.Y. arrested an 18-year-old man on charges of aggravated animal cruelty and assault after he allegedly punched his girlfriend in the face and killed her cat. Allen Van Nostrand was arrested after the woman told police he repeatedly threw the cat against a wall and snapped its neck. The woman suffered minor injuries, according to [CBS6 TV](#) in Albany.



Allen Van Nostrand

Firefighter Charged with Choking Fiancée, Beating Kitten



Wearing a brace on her fractured wrist after her fiancé allegedly choked her, dragged her around the house and repeatedly hit her in the face in front of her two-year-old child, Kelli McCarver told a judge that she still wasn't afraid of Bryan Barfield even though he is also accused of felony animal cruelty.

Barfield, a 240-pound Charlotte, N. Car. firefighter, was being held in custody in the Gaston County jail on five assault and animal cruelty warrants stemming from the violent attack, which included his telling McCarver that if she tried to call the police she'd be dead before they arrived, [WSOC-TV](#) reported.

Bryan Barfield

The animal cruelty charge alleges that Barfield killed a 14-week-old kitten during the July 18 assault by choking it, beating it, punting it like a football across the yard, dunking it in the toilet and slamming the toilet seat against its head.

Link Training Opportunities

Aug. 22 – (online): Phil Tedeschi will present a free webinar on "A Protocol for the Evaluation of Risk and Improved Accuracy in Forensic Animal Abuse Evaluations," 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.

Sept. 16 – Albuquerque, N. Mex.: Phil Arkow, Tamara Ward, Barbara Boat, Tammy Fiebelkorn, and Tricia Norris will be among 14 featured speakers at the [New Mexico Conference on The Link between Animal Cruelty and Human Violence](#).

Sept. 17 – (online): John Goodwin of the Humane Society of the U.S. will present a free webinar on “Bloodstained Dirt: Cockfighting in the United States,” 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.

Sept. 18 – (online): Allie Phillips will conduct a webinar on “SAF-T™” for [RedRover](#).

Sept. 20 – Saskatoon, Sask., Canada: Tim Battle will present results from the “Cruelty Connection” study at the 2013 [Saskatchewan SPCA Animal Welfare Conference](#).

Sept. 25-26 – Hampton, Va.: Allie Phillips will present on “Caught in the Cross Fire: How Animal Abuse Co-Occurs with Family Violence” and co-present with Michele Thames on “How Therapy Animals Help Maltreated Children” at Intervening at the [Crossroads: Child Abuse & Juvenile Justice conference](#) of the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services.

Oct. 5 – (various locations): Participating women’s shelters with on-site domestic violence pet support housing programs will celebrate [National SAF-T™ Day](#) with fundraising dog walks and presentations about pets caught in the crossfire of human violence.

Oct. 15 – (online): Stacy Wolf of the ASPCA will present a free webinar on “Managing Live Evidence in Animal Cruelty and Fighting 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.

Oct. 23 – Valencia, Spain: Nuria Querol i Vinas will train on “Animal Abuse and Interpersonal Violence” at the [Congress on Animal Protection of the Association of Social Educators](#) (SPERA).

Nov. 2 – New York City, N.Y.: The 3rd [Zoobiquity Conference](#) will present a species-spanning conversation among physicians and veterinarians treating similar diseases and public health issues.

Nov. 7-8 – Almoradi, Alicante, Spain: Nuria Querol i 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](#).

Nov. 20-23 – Atlanta, Ga.: Nuria Querol i Vinas will discuss “Animal Abuse and Family Violence in Spain” at the [American Society of Criminology](#) Annual Meeting.



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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Former Director, Domestic Violence/Stalking Program,
Columbus City Attorney's Office/Prosecution Division
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