



NATIONAL LINK COALITION

Working together to stop violence against people and animals

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A monthly report of news from THE NATIONAL RESOURCE CENTER



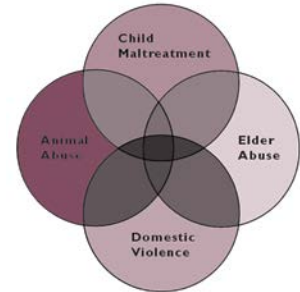
ON THE LINK BETWEEN ANIMAL ABUSE AND HUMAN VIOLENCE



www.nationallinkcoalition.org

[Phil Arkow](#), Editor

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INNOVATIVE PARTNERSHIPS LINK PROTECTION AGENCIES

LINK programs are all about inter-agency connections. In this issue of The LINK-Letter we spotlight six of the newest partnerships that are working to prevent animal abuse and human violence.

1. ASPCA, NYPD to Protect and Serve New York City's Animals



The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals ([ASPCA](#)) and the New York City Police Department ([NYPD](#)) have initiated a groundbreaking strategic

collaboration to vastly expand protection and service to New York City's animals by leveraging the strengths and expertise of both organizations.



Under the agreement, the NYPD – the largest municipal police department in the U.S. – will take the lead in responding to all animal cruelty complaints in the five boroughs, a task historically conducted by a much more limited staff of ASPCA Humane Law Enforcement officers. The NYPD's sheer size, scope, and skill—77 precincts and more than 34,500 officers—make it inherently well equipped to respond promptly to such complaints, all of which will be responded to within eight hours. This will ensure that more animals in jeopardy are reached and removed from harm's way.

The ASPCA will expand its direct care and forensics work to assist law enforcement officials. It will assist with undercover operations and provide critical support for animal cruelty victims, including forensic evaluations, medical treatment, backup legal support in criminal proceedings, training, and shelter, behavior assessments and placement of animals seized. The ASPCA will also provide the NYPD and NYC prosecutors with the veterinary forensic, investigative, legal, and intervention support services crucial to a robust prosecution and a successful outcome.

The partnership was launched on September 1 with a pilot program in the Bronx and will expand citywide in early 2014 to Brooklyn, Manhattan, Queens and Staten Island.

The ASPCA's small group of New York State peace officers has voluntarily enforced animal cruelty laws in the five boroughs since its founding in 1866. However, the modern realities of life call for a new approach to provide broader protections, said Matthew Bershadker, President and CEO of the ASPCA.

"Through this new collaboration, the ASPCA and NYPD together will provide even more effective prevention of cruelty for New York City's animals," said Bershadker. "The NYPD is equipped to do what the ASPCA simply cannot accomplish alone: incorporate the enforcement of animal cruelty laws into routine, everyday law enforcement work; elevate the importance of preventing crimes against animals; and provide necessary resources to combat those crimes. This historic partnership signals to the rest of the country the seriousness of animal cruelty, while potentially serving as a model for other large municipalities.

"This partnership makes best use of the resources of both organizations to strengthen efforts to end cruelty to animals and ensure their welfare. We look forward to significant advances in this ongoing mission," Bershadker added.

2. Domestic Violence Pet Program Helps American Ex-Pats

The challenges for women with pets fleeing domestic violence situations are numerous, and a growing network of programs now provide foster care or animal housing at women's shelters to protect all vulnerable family members. But what happens if the survivor is an American living overseas and she needs to return to the U.S.?

She can apply to an American embassy or consulate for emergency repatriation loans, but these will not cover the costs of relocating her pets unless they are official service animals. With such restrictions, ex-pat families are often forced to make painful choices between leaving or staying in a violent home.

In response to this dilemma, the [Americans Overseas Domestic Violence Crisis Center](#) initiated the Protecting Pets Program in 2012 to pay for shots, airline kennels, food and shipping fees. Donor support enabled the group to bring home four dogs, six cats and two bunnies in 2012.

Pets are part of the family and especially important for those fleeing a violent home, providing comfort and security to victims and their families. "We don't want families worrying about what will happen to their pets, who are often also abused in a violent home," the organization noted in its 2012 Annual Report.

The work has been recognized by the survivors themselves. "You are angels!" wrote Beth from Croatia. "You have made a huge difference in our lives by keeping us together with our beloved Roxy in a time of crisis. Roxy sends a big doggy kiss!"



3. Pet Support for Domestic Violence Survivors Extended to Homeless Families

While over 900 domestic violence shelters have referral programs to provide foster care for the animal survivors of domestic violence, and 75 allow families to bring their pets with them, few shelters for the homeless – many of whom are also survivors of domestic violence – are believed to accommodate pets as well. This may change with the launching of a new initiative from PetSmart, the nation’s largest specialty pet retailer.



A pet and family area allows get-togethers

The Phoenix-based company donated \$30,000 to enable the [Greater Phoenix affiliate of Family Promise](#) to build on-site pet kennels that allow the entire family to remain intact while they search for work and permanent housing. A two-bedroom unit was transformed into a sanctuary for as many as eight dogs and eight cats. The PetSmart Promise program was a most welcome addition and addressed a very real concern for families. “Often, we’d offer them foster capability and they would refuse shelter. They would rather stay with their pets than come into our program,” said Phoenix director Ted Taylor.



The PetSmart Promise program also offers residents complimentary boarding at PetSmart boarding facilities, pet food, and spay/neuter and vaccinations. It installs fish tanks at affiliates’ day centers to teach children about the care and responsibility of pet ownership, and provides foster housing options when necessary. The program will expand nationwide with five new facilities opening each year, with 2013 openings scheduled for Lake Houston, Tex., Fayetteville, N. Car., and Bozeman, Mont.

The program was spotlighted by the [NBC-TV Today show](#) on July 30, promoting the “unbreakable bond” between families and pets. “Keeping the pet at a time of homelessness is massively beneficial for the family and the well-being of the children,” said Joe O’Leary of the PetSmart Promise campaign.

Family Promise is a nationwide network of 182 affiliates in 41 states that helps homeless and low-income families to achieve sustainable independence through a multifaceted response that includes food, shelter, support services, educational outreach, and advocacy.

4. Vet School, SPCA Team Up for Training



The Houston SPCA and College of Veterinary Medicine at Texas A&M University have [announced a partnership](#) that will offer veterinary students an intensive look into cases of cruelty, trauma, abuse and neglect in multiple species of animals. Through the partnership, fourth-year students will undergo a two-week program at the SPCA, which handles 50,000 animals and investigates 9,000 cases of abuse each year. Students will live near the SPCA in an apartment that is funded by the college, and will work with abused pets, farm animals, exotics, and native wildlife.



The program will allow students to work with law enforcement officers in investigating cases – which they have not done before – and will experience going to court to see how cruelty cases play out.

Veterinary school Dean Eleanor Green said the program will offer “intimate immersion in the handling of animal abuse cases” and will help graduate a generation of vet students who will “disseminate throughout Texas and beyond with a deep understanding of animal welfare and shelter medicine.”

5. Domestic Violence/Humane Shelters Partner for Pet Care



Meeting at the Humane Society were **Suzyn Barron, Humane Society President, Sarita Green, Safe Homes Director of Residential Services, and Leslie Maier, Humane Society volunteer.**

Citing “a proven correlation between domestic violence and pet abuse” and how the presence of pets can interfere with domestic violence survivors getting to safety, the Orange County, N.Y. [Chronicle reported](#) a partnership between [Safe Homes of Orange County](#) and the [Warwick Valley Humane Society](#) to provide emergency care for the pets of sheltered families.

The Safe Pets Project will fill a gap in Safe Homes’ services. The two agencies will engage in cross-referrals, collaborative training, education, outreach, and community forums. Safe Homes advocates will screen people asking for shelter about the presence of pets in the home and complete a detailed assessment of the temporary housing needs for the pets. The program is operating without additional funding.

“When I learned of a little girl who refused to leave her home because she couldn’t take her pet hamster with her, I knew that our collaboration with Safe Homes could help remove a barrier to the safety of families and their pets,” said Humane Society President Suzyn Barron.

6. Court Dog Program Serves Survivors of Domestic Violence

Domestic violence survivors in Pittsburgh, Penna. will have the benefit of a unique animal-assisted therapy program to help them through the challenging ordeal of testifying against their abuser. Under a new program, “Penelope,” a therapy dog residing at Crisis Center North (CCN), will be accompanying survivors in magisterial courts as they go through the processes of speaking to advocates, police officers and court personnel.

The Court Dog program is being launched by Allegheny County District Attorney Stephen Zappala and Judges Donna Jo McDaniel and Anthony Saveikis. Penelope will begin her court duties with Saveikis, but other magistrates have expressed interest in the program and there are plans for expansion.



Stephen Zappala and Penelope

“For victims, the criminal justice process can be overwhelming and anything we can do to make that process less so is important,” Zappala told the [New Pittsburgh Courier](#). “The opportunity to use therapy dogs to give victims and their families a calming influence is unique and progressive and I am pleased that my office can partner with CCN to make this project happen.”

Animal Hoarding: An Issue for Mental Health Professionals



Gary Patronek

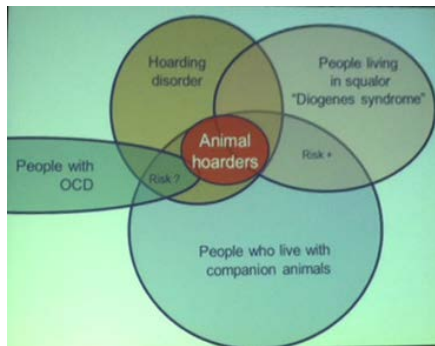
Animal hoarding is a particularly challenging form of mental illness and an intractable form of animal cruelty to deal with for several reasons, according to Gary J. Patronek. Speaking to the American Veterinary Medical Association's annual conference in July, Patronek, a professor at the Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine at Tufts University, noted that animal hoarding may be a specialized form of hoarding disorder, which has now been recognized as a discrete disorder (category 300.3) in the 5th edition of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM-5).

Whereas hoarding was previously considered a type of obsessive-compulsive disorder, recent research suggests little overlap and instead focuses on histories of early childhood trauma and stressful life events as affecting neurobiology and leading to a disordered attachment style that may predispose some individuals to hoarding objects. These findings are aligned with experiences with animal hoarders.

“Thus, it is possible that in adulthood, some people who have difficulty establishing supportive interpersonal relationships or who otherwise have difficulty coping with life stressors would find refuge in animals,” he said. Animals provide these individuals with reward, acceptance, conflict-free relationships, and a sense of self-worth.

Patronek also described the compulsive caregiving that is the hallmark of animal hoarding within the context of “pathological altruism,” a term used by Barbara Oakley to describe situations driven more by the needs of the caregiver than by the recipient.

Another challenge facing mental health, animal protection, and other agencies dealing with animal hoarders is that the hoarder does not intend to harm, and typically professes great concern and even love for the animals. Unlike deliberate abuse, during which suffering may be the result of an abrupt, violent action, in animal hoarding the suffering accrues and increases over time due to the cumulative effects of crowding, confinement, lack of socialization, isolation, denial, untreated disease, and disability. These conditions can also adversely affect the health and well-being of humans in the home and often necessitate multi-disciplinary interventions.



Animal hoarders have relatively few overlaps with OCD behaviors, according to Patronek

to “wait” until conditions deteriorate to a sufficient level of neglect that successful criminal prosecution is possible.

Patronek noted that increased awareness of the multidisciplinary aspects of animal hoarding cases is creating connections among forensic mental health professionals, the legal system, veterinarians, and animal protection authorities.

The Link Comes to Costa Rica

Efforts to expand Link awareness in Latin America got support through an exhibition, “Cruelty to Animals: First Manifestation of Social Violence.” The exhibition was organized by the Association for Welfare and Shelter of Animals (ABAA) and the Judiciary of Costa Rica, which showed the link between animal cruelty and other forms of violence through the intervention of experts and photographs of abused animals.

Eva Camacho, Judge of the Second Chamber of the Supreme Court of Costa Rica, considers the relationship between domestic violence and animal abuse to be scientifically proven and that the Central American nation must commit more protection policies to avoid the mistreatment of animals.



[The World Society for the Protection of Animals](#) participated in the exhibition. WSPA has requested measures to strengthen the law punishing animal abuse in the country.

Gabriela Arguedas, an expert in bioethics, told the group that cruelty is not instinctive but develops by learning. Hence, a person who abuses an animal may be more inclined to violence in other areas. Also, people who abuse animals develop an insensitivity towards other forms of life that makes them more likely to express that insensitivity against humans.

The Link in the Legislatures

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.

Pet Protection Orders

 **Ohio HB243** would allow courts to include companion animals in domestic violence, anti-stalking and temporary protection orders. The bill would also require children adjudicated as delinquent for committing animal cruelty to undergo psychological evaluation and counseling, and adult offenders to be sentenced to probation supervision.

Animal Abuse and Other Crimes

 **Florida HB 851** was signed into law on June 28. It adds illegal animal fighting to crimes that can be prosecuted as "racketeering activities" under Florida's RICO Act. Racketeering includes committing, attempting to commit, conspiring to commit, or to solicit, coerce or intimidate another person to commit a crime under the RICO classification.

 Testimony that animal cruelty frequently leads to other crimes was presented in support of **Hawaii SB 9**, which was signed into law July 2. The law prohibits a person convicted of animal cruelty in the first degree from owning any pet or horse for a period of five years.

The Link in the Literature

Animal Abuse as a Signal Crime for Juvenile Justice Officials

With so many important issues facing juvenile justice professionals, concern over animal abuse is usually not at the top of the list. But the implications of animal cruelty as an indicator and predictor crime should compel juvenile justice officials to pay greater attention, wrote Sherry Ramsey, Director of Cruelty Prosecutions for the Humane Society of the U.S. in this article for the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges. While increasing the priority is compromised by the absence of systematically monitored animal cruelty statistics, empirical evidence and anecdotal case histories should lead professionals to give greater credence to incidents of juvenile-perpetrated animal abuse.

-- Ramsey, S. (2012). *Cause for concern: Juveniles and crimes of animal cruelty. Juvenile and Family Justice Today, 21(2), 12-14.*

Animal Abuse as a Trigger for Fatal Dog Bites

A history of animal abuse has been reported to be one of several factors that often co-occur in fatal dog bites. In a study of 256 fatal dog attacks from 2000-2009 utilizing interviews and reports from homicide detectives, fatal dog bites were examined from the perspective of situational and environmental factors that may be behaviorally-relevant from a dog's perspective, rather than focusing on the breeds of the dogs involved. In 21.1% of the fatalities, dog abuse or neglect was reported. Other common factors included: no able-bodied person present to intervene (87.1%); victim having no familiar relationship with dog(s)(85.2%); owner failing to neuter/spay dog(s) (84.4%); compromised ability of victim to interact appropriately with the dog(s) (77.4%); owner keeping dog(s) as a resident dog vs. family pet (76.2%); and prior mismanagement of dog(s) by the owner (37.5%). Highly striking was that four or more of these factors were concurrent in 80.5% of deaths. The authors concluded that most dog bite-related fatalities were characterized by coincident, preventable, policy-relevant factors; the dog's breed was not one of these.

-- Patronek, G.J., Sacks, J.J., Delise, K., et al. (2013). Co-occurrence of potentially preventable factors in 256 dog bite-related fatalities in the U.S., 2000-2009. *Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association* [in press].

Animal Abuse/Domestic Violence Link in Spain Mirrors Other Nations

A [study of 38 women survivors](#) of domestic violence in Spain reports that 78% of them said their pets had been abused or killed by their abuser, and 86% of their children reported the animals had been a source of love and comfort. In four cases their children were animal abusers who also abused their parents. Three were women aged 19, 20 and 21 diagnosed with borderline personality disorder. The fourth was an 8-year-old boy who was abused by his father and who killed a fish and tried to kill a canary. The boy also presented for enuresis, fascination for fire, self-harm, bullying, and has been diagnosed with conduct disorder, oppositional defiant disorder, ADHD, and psychopathic traits.

-- Querol, N., et. al. (2013). Family violence and animal abuse in Spain. Presentation at American Society of Criminology Meeting, November 21, 2013, Atlanta.

Study Explores Animal Shelters' Involvement with The Link

A study of animal shelters in Latin America and Spain investigated these organizations' involvement with The Link. 38% of participants reported that between ¼ and ½ of their animals had suffered violence, 77.5% acknowledged links between family violence and animal abuse, but 75% do not yet have an agreement with a domestic violence shelter (6.9% do, and the rest are working on establishing a common protocol). 95.4% believe animal-assisted therapies may be beneficial for domestic violence victims.

-- Querol, N., et. al. (2013). Preliminary results of the DOMPET study for shelters in Spain and Latin America. Presentation at American Society of Criminology Meeting, November 21, 2013, Atlanta.

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NEWS FROM LINK COALITIONS

Albany, N.Y. to Launch Animal Cruelty Task Force

Following a growing tradition in American communities, the District Attorney of Albany County, N.Y. has announced the formation of a new Animal Abuse Task Force that will include police, veterinarians and local animal shelter representatives. D.A. David Soares told the [Albany Times-Union](#) that punishments for animal abusers have traditionally been too lenient, and the task force will enhance the abilities of first-responders and result in better sentences. He compared animal abuse cases to domestic violence incidents which previously faced a similar lack of respect in the criminal justice system. A felony-prosecuting assistant district attorney will be appointed to oversee all animal-related cases.



Albany D.A. David Soares with two police bloodhounds

Animal cruelty cases should be investigated by the police's best officers. "They should know what they're looking at. They should know who they need to call. You shouldn't arrive at a crime scene, not treat it as a crime scene and then call the dog warden to come in and scoop up your evidence and bring your evidence somewhere. That's another part that hopefully we can begin to repair in this county," Soares said.

Swedish Link Coalitions Launch Websites



Sweden's national Link coalition, **Se Sambandet** (See the Link) has launched [a new website](#), created a logo, and is preparing to start a Facebook page as well. The website already features two new brochures about The Link created in Swedish, materials from the U.S. and Scotland, and a list of links. Nathalie Nordén tells us that more than one-half of Sweden's 20 county administrative boards have conducted seminars during the past two years for local police, NGOs, domestic violence shelters, social workers and animal welfare organizations on the subject of domestic violence and violence targeting family pets.

Meanwhile, **VOOV** (Veterinär Omtanke Om Våldsutsatta), a nonprofit founded by veterinarians and veterinary students in Uppsala to help abused people leave abusive relationships, has launched a [website](#) as well. Founded in 2011 with a three-year grant from the Swedish Inheritance Fund Commission, VOOV provides temporary foster homes for abused women living in protected accommodations in nine locations in Sweden. VOOV stands for Veterinary Concern for the Abused and "voov" is the Swedish equivalent of "woof."



A “TAIL” OF TWO CITIES NAMED PORTLAND....

Oregon Link Animal Therapy Program Recognized for Youth Work

A Portland, Ore. animal-assisted therapy program that works with children in domestic violence shelters was recognized by the [Oregonian](#) newspaper for its novel approach with youths in juvenile shelters and foster care. [The Little Dog Laughed](#) – an organization that took its name from the children’s nursery rhyme to convey the importance of reading an animal’s body language as a way to understand positive reinforcement – is a member of the [Washington County Multi-Disciplinary Team](#) that investigates animal abuse/domestic violence links and protects human and animal victims.



Dog trainer Linda Keast developed a clicker-training method to teach troubled youths positive communication skills. “These kids are in a highly volatile state, they’re hyper-vigilant, they’re not ready to trust anyone because they’ve been betrayed by people that they trusted, and they start closing down,” Keast said. “What you need to work with somebody in this vulnerable state is calmness and a carrot that they’re willing to work for.”

The STAR (See, Tag and Reward) Program teaches problem-solving skills by breaking down issues into bite-sized pieces. “It’s been amazing to see how interacting with Linda and [therapy dog] Eli has helped our kids come out of their shells, learn how to set boundaries and have empathy,” said Lindsey Vold, youth program coordinator at the Raphael House domestic violence shelter.

Maine Link Coalition’s Training Program Featured

Meanwhile, south of the other Portland (Maine), the [York County Linkage Coalition](#) was spotlighted in the [Weekly Sentinel](#) newspaper for conducting a training program at the York County Child Prevention Council’s Summer Institute, a continuing education and accreditation program



for mandated reporters. The Coalition, formed in 2010, educates communities in southern Maine about The Link and empowers all members of the community to respond effectively when they suspect violence. The coalition feels that by promoting empathy and inter-agency cross-reporting, positive and effective changes can be made in the way that society views violence.

YCLC speakers at the Institute were Gabriela Rodriguez of Blixs Horses, who discussed how the Link affects non-pet animals such as horses; Gail Crowell of the Animal Welfare Society; Karen Connolly of the Department of Health and Human Services’ Office of Aging and Disability Services; and Leah Paltanawick of Kids Free to Grow.

THE LINK IN THE NEWS

Man Sentenced to 12 Years in Rape/Animal Cruelty Case

A New Britain, Conn. man who had pleaded no-contest to sexual assault and animal cruelty charges for raping a 14-year-old girl and brutally attacking her dog who was trying to protect her was sentenced to 12 years in prison, 30 years probation, and declared a sex offender for life. Francisco Castellano had been charged with pinning down and raping the girl about 10 times in the fall of 2011, leaving bruises on her arms. He also kicked her dog, a small poodle/Chihuahua mix, several times when it bit him as the victim was fighting Castellano off, and threw it across the living room by its legs, the [Hartford Courant](#) reported. Police investigators uncovered three additional cases involving Castellano and young girls dating to 2004.

Animal Cruelty Alleged in Kidnapping/Murder Case...

Animal cruelty may have also been involved in the highly publicized case of Hannah Anderson, the 16-year-old San Diego-area teenager who was rescued from her kidnapper in the Idaho woods six days after he allegedly tortured and killed her mother and brother. The [Associated Press](#) reported that James Lee DiMaggio is believed to have also shot and killed their family dog, who was found under a sleeping bag in the garage with blood close to its head.

DiMaggio, 40, said to have been a family friend before the abduction, was shot and killed by law enforcement officers.



Hannah Anderson (reclining) and James DiMaggio (right) posed in a family photo.

... While Kidnap Victim Adopts Her Abductor's Dog

Gina DeJesus, one of the three women abducted and held captive by Ariel Castro for more than a decade in a Cleveland basement, had one bright spot in her unimaginable horror: Castro's terrier-mix named Lola. Castro reportedly owned three dogs, which he would allow his captives to play with and which he would take away as punishment. Following the dramatic rescue of the three women, Lola, a Chihuahua named Dina, and a Shih Tzu-mix named Drake were taken to a rescue agency where they were put up for adoption.



One of Castro's three dogs peers from its cage at a Cleveland shelter.

Cleveland dog warden John Baird, finding the dogs essentially healthy and friendly, offered the three women first choice for adopting them.

"They may have bonded with these dogs, and we would like for them to have a shot at them, just because it was something they could attach themselves to," [he said](#). DeJesus quickly took Baird up on his offer, but the other two women declined, and the dogs were expected to be re-homed elsewhere. Castro recently committed suicide in his jail cell where he was serving a term of life without parole plus 1,000 years after pleading guilty to 937 charges.

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.

Man Charged with Domestic Assault and Animal Cruelty

Austin Todd Bacheller, 24, of Martinez, Ga., was arrested on charges of aggravated assault, animal cruelty and property damage for allegedly attacking his girlfriend with a knife, stomping her on the ground, and throwing her kitten against a wall. The woman told police she feared that Bacheller, whose criminal history includes DUI, drug charges and battery, would post explicit videos of themselves online to retaliate. He had a history of punching furniture, stabbing a wall with scissors and a mattress with a steak knife, the [Athens Banner-Herald](#) reported, but she did not report the incidents earlier for fear of being stabbed. She fled their home on foot after the most recent altercation.



Austin Bacheller

Link Training Opportunities

Sept. 13 – Scottsdale, Ariz.: The Link between animal cruelty and family violence and its importance in preventing future crimes will be included in a [workshop](#) on “Effective Enforcement and Prosecution of Animal Cruelty.”

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 [Red Rover](#).

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. 1-31 – United States: DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH

Oct. 2-3 – Nantucket, Mass.: [Allie Phillips](#) will present trainings on The Link to professional agencies and the Nantucket community, collaborating to work together and provide services for children, domestic partners and animals experiencing violence.

Oct. 4 – Yakima, Wash.: The [Washington State Veterinary Medical Association](#) conference will include workshops by Randall Lockwood on “Who Hurts Animals and Why?” and “The Role of the Veterinarian in Recognizing and Responding to Animal Cruelty,” and Rachel Touroo on “An Introduction to Veterinary Forensic Pathology.”

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. 22-23 – Blacksburg, Va.: Rachel Touroo will present on “Getting the Most Out of Your Forensic Necropsy,” and Randall Lockwood will discuss “Recognizing and Responding to Rescue Hoarders,” at the [Virginia Animal Control Association](#) conference.

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).

Oct. 24 – San Antonio, Texas: Chris Risley-Curtiss will present a workshop on The Link, “Abusers Don’t Discriminate,” at the 65th Annual [Conference of Southwest Foundations](#).

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. 7-8 – Hartford, Conn.: Phil Arkow will conduct trainings for the Connecticut Department of Children & Families and Department of Agriculture on cross-reporting animal abuse and child maltreatment.

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.

Nov. 19 – (online): Scott Heiser will present a free webinar on “Common Issues when Investigating and Prosecuting Animal Neglect 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.

Nov. 21 – San Antonio, Texas: Phil Arkow will present on “Animal Abuse, Elder Abuse and Hoarding: Challenges and Strategies for Adult Protective Services” at the [30th Annual APS Conference](#).

Dec. 10 – (online): Randall Lockwood will present a webinar on “Animal Cruelty and Interpersonal Violence: Addressing ‘The Link’ for Safer Communities,” for the [National Crime Prevention Council](#).

To subscribe to The Link-Letter (*it’s 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.



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.

Members of the National Link Coalition Steering Committee

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Chair, Animal Abuse & Family Violence Prevention Project,
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