



# NATIONAL LINK COALITION

*Working together to stop violence against people and animals*

**The LINK-Letter Vol. 8, No. 11 November, 2015**

*A monthly report of news from THE NATIONAL RESOURCE CENTER*



**ON THE LINK BETWEEN ANIMAL ABUSE AND HUMAN VIOLENCE**



[www.NationalLinkCoalition.org](http://www.NationalLinkCoalition.org)

[Phil Arkow](#), Coordinator and Editor

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## ***ANIMAL ABUSE AND... DOMESTIC VIOLENCE***

### **Kentucky Supreme Court Affirms Link in Lethality Review**

The Kentucky Supreme Court handed down a decision (2014-SC-000456-DGE) on Oct. 29 affirming a lower court's ruling that abuse of a pet was an acceptable consideration in the lethality analysis used in issuing a domestic violence restraining order.



In 2013, Sara Pettingill filed a domestic violence petition against her husband, Jeffrey Pettingill, from whom she had recently separated and was seeking a divorce. She alleged that his violent, controlling and unstable behaviors made her fear for her own safety and the well-being of their minor daughter. His actions included abusing the family pet in front of their daughter, setting up surveillance cameras inside their home, locking her out of bank accounts, accessing her e-mail and social media accounts, and breaking her cell phone. She indicated that he kept a firearm even though he was a convicted felon and had threatened the life of his ex-wife who had filed domestic violence charges against him.

Based on her petition, the Jefferson Family Court entered a domestic violence order against Jeffrey, noting that he had exhibited nine of the 12 top lethality factors in intimate partner violence, of which the abuse of the family pet was the first cited. Jeffrey appealed, stating the Family Court erred in basing its decision on these 12 lethality factors rather than on Kentucky's statutes defining domestic violence and who may file for protective orders. An Appeals Court affirmed the Family Court ruling and said that Family Court had applied the appropriate standard.

The Supreme Court further affirmed the decision and noted that a trial court may take judicial notice of adjudicative facts coming from "unimpeachable sources" that are not subject to reasonable dispute. The ruling cited several sources of domestic violence lethality factors which include animal abuse among the potential predictors used to evaluate the threat of domestic violence between partners.

## Los Angeles SPCA's Animal Safety Net Shelters Pet Survivors



The Los Angeles SPCA recognized October as Domestic Violence Awareness Month by conducting an unusual fundraising campaign to support its [Animal Safety Net](#) that provides free shelter for the pets of domestic violence survivors. The goal was to garner enough votes in an online challenge by early November to win a \$100,000 grant that would expand ASN and break the cycle of violence for more people and their pets.

The Los Angeles-based Goldhirsh Foundation, which supports pragmatic and idealistic programs that translate into real-world innovation, has an initiative called LA2050 to create a shared vision for the future of the region. The initiative will provide a framework to harness the area's untapped potential and lay out a roadmap for an innovative, community-minded metropolis with a robust middle class. An annual grants challenge awards \$100,000 for the five best ideas of what would make L.A. a great

place to play, learn, live, create, and connect.

"Animal Safety Net assists domestic violence survivors by offering free temporary housing for their pets, taking them out of harm's way, and allowing survivors to relocate to a domestic violence shelter. While under our care, animals receive veterinary treatment, vaccinations and spay/neuter surgery. Families remain in contact with their pets through photos and updates until they are safely out of the shelter and reunited," said President Madeline Bernstein.

"Domestic violence, child abuse, and animal abuse are all linked. Studies have found that domestic violence abusers who harm animals are twice as likely have also abused a child. These children suffer both physical and mental abuse – as the exposure to their beloved pet being hurt can have deeply adverse psychological effects. ASN helps stop this cycle of violence. This program empowers survivors to leave and seek care. Further, if animal abuse is suspected, spcaLA Humane Officers will investigate and work to prosecute the offenders.

"At its core, ASN gives domestic violence survivors peace of mind," the Goldhirsh proposal stated. "The comfort in knowing their adored pet is protected and cared for helps survivors escape, persevere, and begin building a safer, healthier life for themselves and their family."

### *Permission to Reprint*

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## ***ANIMAL ABUSE AND... CHILD MALTREATMENT***

### **Connecticut Child Abuse/Animal Cruelty**

#### **Cross-Reporting Figures Released to “LINKin’ Lawyers”**

Connecticut’s Quinnipiac University School of Law was the site of a symposium for “LINKin’ Lawyers” on Oct. 8 as a panel of authorities described animal abuse as “the violence gateway.” Hosted by the school’s Animal Law Society and the Connecticut Bar Association’s Animal Law Section, the program provided insights to 55 attorneys and other interested parties.

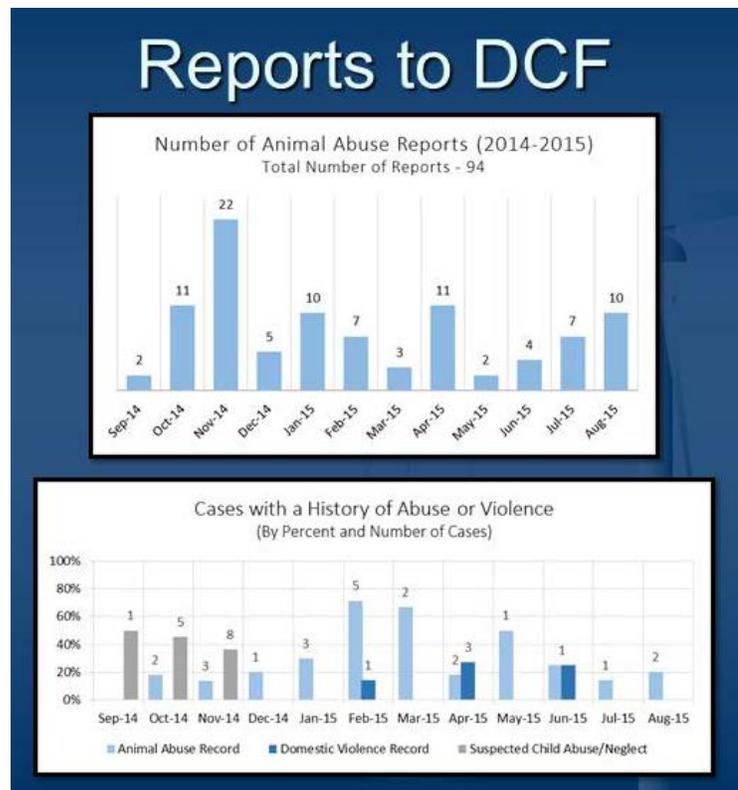
Anne McIntyre-Lahner, Director of Performance Management for the Department of Children and Families, described Connecticut’s pioneering cross-reporting protocol (see [LINK-Letter July, 2011](#)) and presented preliminary data from the program’s first year in operation.

Animal control officers who file cruelty charges make a report to the Department of Agriculture, which sends a list of those addresses each month to DCF. Within one week, DCF checks the addresses of the animal cruelty cases against its list of outstanding child abuse cases. When there are overlaps, DCF caseworkers are notified accordingly.

Between September 2014 to August 2015, 94 animal cruelty cases were reported to DCF; 14 of these addresses were locations with histories of suspected child abuse, although there was only one case where child abuse was substantiated. Five of the addresses also had histories of domestic violence.

The overwhelming majority of animal cruelty reports involved cases of neglect with animals being denied adequate food, water or shelter, she said. There were numerous cases of children and animals living in extreme filth and fecal matter. Other issues which surfaced included aggressive dogs posing risks to children in the home, and abandoned animals that appeared to be starving.

Meanwhile, DCF workers who observe suspected animal cruelty are required to report it to the Department of Agriculture within 48 hours. Statistics regarding DCF reports of suspected animal abuse to the Department of Agriculture were not available.



## The Hawaiian Humane Society: Addressing The Link -- Since 1883!

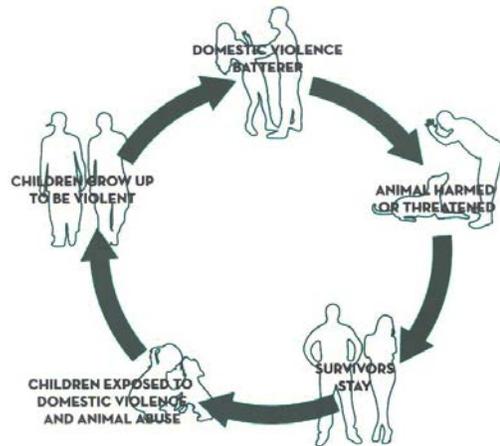
Founded on the steps of the Iolani Palace in the earliest years of the humane movement in 1883, the Honolulu-based Hawaiian Humane Society has long had a multi-disciplinary focus for the prevention of various forms of family violence. Striving to create a more compassionate and caring community in what was then the Kingdom of Hawai'i, the fledgling organization set out to protect the most vulnerable members of society by preventing cruelty to animals and to children, and by protecting unwed mothers and individuals with mental illnesses.

“Our founders knew instinctually that cruelty and violence, whether to animals or people, are intertwined in ways that are impossible to separate,” says Pam Burns, President and CEO. As the first welfare agency in Hawai'i, the society's child protection function was deeply embedded in its operations until 1935, when it spun off those programs in what was to become a more specialized government-operated Child and Family Services department.

“We have not forgotten that the connection remains,” says Burns. “Offenders with a violent mindset are as likely to abuse an animal as they are another human. Our humane investigators, veterinarians and staff members fully recognize that animal abuse is a form of domestic violence.”

Though not specifically named among those mandated to report suspected child abuse to CFS in Hawai'i, the society's humane investigators are considered law enforcement officers in their anti-cruelty and animal control work, and consequently are mandated reporters as are all law enforcement officers in the state. Officers frequently report suspected child abuse and elder abuse, and work closely with domestic violence organizations as well, providing emergency foster care for the pets of survivors fleeing abusive homes.

“All cases of abuse have the potential to be connected to other forms of violence and the society's humane investigators are often the first point of contact for a family in need of help,” says Burns.



A schematic drawing of the intergenerational cycle of violence in domestic violence/animal abuse cases, as used by the Hawaiian Humane Society in its educational materials.



Participants in the four Link training programs sponsored by the Hawaiian Humane Society gather after a luncheon for the organization's donors. From left, Humane Society Board Chair Ginny Tiu, National Link Coalition Coordinator Phil Arkow, Humane Society President & CEO Pam Burns, and City & County of Honolulu Prosecutor Keith Kaneshiro enjoy a lovely afternoon in paradise. “Violence is violence, whether the victim is an animal or a person,” Kaneshiro later told some 50 of his staff members. “It's all connected, and that's why cruelty to animals is a priority for this department.”

The Hawaiian Humane Society was instrumental in lobbying the state legislature in 2009 to secure the passage of domestic violence temporary restraining orders that include pets. Its humane education efforts include anti-bullying messages and behavior-modification animal training programs for aggressive teenagers. The society frequently uses a tag line of “People for animals. Animals for people.”

The society’s Link activities recently included an invitation to Phil Arkow, National Link Coalition Coordinator, to bring training to over 230 people comprising the society’s donors and staff, the Honolulu Prosecutor’s Office, police officials, and the Domestic Violence Action Center. The latter organization includes a question as to whether the abuser attempted or killed household pets in its 17-question Lethality and Risk Assessment questionnaire.

“We encourage all community members to view animal abuse as a serious issue. By increasing the awareness of the connection between animal abuse and other forms of violent crimes we are helping to stop the cycle of violence committed against both animal and human victims,” she says.

## ***ANIMAL ABUSE AND VETERINARY MEDICINE***



### **Pennsylvania Bill Would Protect DVMs Who Report Suspected Animal Abuse**

A bill in the Pennsylvania General Assembly would protect veterinarians, certified veterinary technicians and assistants from civil liability if they report suspected cases of animal abuse in good faith to law enforcement authorities. **HB760**, introduced by Rep. Mark Keller in June with 43 co-sponsors, is intended to further encourage veterinarians to report animal cruelty and neglect when they spot it.

Currently, Pennsylvania law mandates veterinarians to report animal abuse only when the act is committed by another practitioner. Eighteen states permit veterinarians to report suspected animal abuse, and 17 states mandate that they do so. Of the 35 states mandating or permitting veterinarians to report, eight do not yet include provisions protecting veterinarians from civil and/or criminal liability for making such reports.

Bills such as HB760 are significant because veterinarians are often the first to spot animal abuse or neglect, said Michael San Filippo of the American Veterinary Medical Association. “Even though a person may seem to care enough about an animal to take it to a veterinarian, the veterinarians can see suspicious or repeated injuries such as, for example, in cases of dog fighting,” San Filippo said. “It’s like a physician seeing repeated injury in a child.”

The bill passed the House on Sept. 29 and is currently in the Senate Judiciary Committee.

## ***THE LINK AND... CRIMINAL JUSTICE***

### **Queens Names Animal Cruelty Prosecutor**



**Nicoletta Caferra**

Queens County, N.Y. – one of the five boroughs of New York City – has joined the growing list of jurisdictions where district attorneys have responded to the significance and complexity of animal cruelty cases by assigning a special prosecutor. Nicoletta Caferra, a 26-year veteran prosecutor with 17 years of appellate experience, was recently put in charge of animal cruelty cases by Queens District Attorney Richard A. Brown.

“It amazes me that in a community where neighbors won’t call to report a shooting or other crime they will call to report an animal cruelty case,” Caferra told the Quinnipiac University Law School Violence Gateway Symposium, recalling the 1964 death of Kitty Genovese whose stabbing was witnessed but not reported by numerous neighbors.

Caferra itemized several reasons as to why it is important to enforce animal cruelty laws:

- A civil society and basic human decency demand humane treatment of living, feeling beings.
- Prosecutors are charged with the task of enforcing all laws.
- Animal abuse signals sociopathic traits, so early intervention could potentially prevent or limit future violent crimes against people.
- Animal abuse cases are useful in uncovering domestic abuse and can prevent or limit future domestic violence.
- Such cases also uncover other crimes, such as gambling, money-laundering, narcotics, weapons offenses and gang activity.

Aggressive prosecution of high-profile cases also offers opportunities for positive mainstream and social media coverage. “No one admires an animal abuser, even those who aren’t animal lovers,” she said.

“Protecting animals from unnecessary or gratuitous pain and suffering is a component of a civilized society,” she said. “And we may be the only lawyers on earth whose clients are all innocent.”

### **The Association of Prosecuting Attorneys’ Animal Cruelty and Fighting Statement of Principles**

- **Animals are sentient beings with the undeniable capacity to suffer pain.**
- **Every state’s criminal code recognizes animals’ capacity to suffer, with all 50 states identifying certain acts of animal cruelty as felonies.**
- **There is a direct link between the criminal acts of animal abuse and interpersonal violence including murder, child abuse, domestic violence, and elder abuse.**
- **Under-enforcement of animal cruelty laws is directly correlated to a host of corrosive societal ills—such as animal fighting in gangs and the harming or killing of companion animals in domestic violence situations.**
- **Animal cruelty, both active and passive, is a crime of violence, and as such requires a prosecutor’s full attention, with the accompanying allocation of resources to hold the offenders accountable and achieve just results.**
- **Prosecutors, in exercising their professional discretion, should give animal cruelty cases priority and make certain they are handled in the same professional manner as other crimes of violence.**

## Cat Helps Police Bring Down Suicidal Car Theft Suspect

The positive side of the human-animal bond was on display in San Francisco on Oct. 8 when a car theft suspect who threatened suicide when police pursued him was coaxed down from a building by police who showed him his pet cat. The standoff began when the suspect was pulled over by a CHP officer. While the officer was taking down the information, the suspect fled on foot, jumped a fence and climbed up the fire escape of a building where he stayed perched and barefoot for two hours, threatening to jump. When police negotiators failed to bring him down, family members brought his cat to help coax the man down, [KGO-TV](#) reported. There was no word as to whether charges were filed.



San Francisco police credit the suspect's love for his cat with convincing him to come down from his lofty perch

## *BUILDING AWARENESS ABOUT THE LINK*

### Huffington Post Helps Public to Connect the Link Dots

#### THE HUFFINGTON POST

An extensive series of interviews with noted Link authorities, published in [The Huffington Post](#) on Oct. 8, is bringing The Link to public attention and recognizing that animal abuse is often connected to other forms of family violence. Environment and Public Health Reporter Lynne Peoples interviewed Allie Phillips, Martha Smith-Blackmore, Phil Arkow, Rachel Touroo, Frank Ascione, and Randall Lockwood for the 2,000-word article.

“If You Want to Stop Violence Against People, Stop Violence Against Animals” covered such topics as mass murderers with animal abuse histories, animal abuse as a predictor of future criminal activity and a red flag for domestic violence, new legislative strategies, the advantages of early interventions, veterinary forensics and CSI, and a first-person account of a California woman whose dog was beaten, skinned and stabbed.

The article is the first in a series on animal abuse. The next article will focus on domestic violence.

## Spanish Police Learn About The Link and Adverse Encounters with Dogs

Dr. Núria Querol Viñas (right), of Spain's [GEVHA Link Coalition](#), co-presented with Sònia Pujol and Judge Eva Diaz on animal abuse and interpersonal violence at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Conference on Police Intervention with Canines. The event, in Malgrat de Mar included representatives from numerous Spanish law enforcement agencies and included demonstrations by K-9 police dogs.



## NEWS from LOCAL LINK COALITIONS

### Safe Haven Network Gets Publicity, Launches Portal in Chicago



Chicago's [Safe Haven Network](#) was featured in a recent issue of [FW: The Magazine for Chicago Women](#). "When we hear dialogue about the problem of domestic violence, the focus is usually on the human victims, as it well should be," wrote Jennifer Smith Tapp in the article. "But an often overlooked secondary casualty is the pet that is also living in a volatile environment."

Safe Haven Network was founded four years ago to provide temporary emergency boarding for the pets of domestic violence survivors. The group celebrated Domestic Violence Awareness Month with its third annual supply drive to collect donations for community partners at domestic violence shelters around Chicagoland.

Founder Jessica Katz tells *The LINK-Letter* that an online portal was launched at an inaugural benefit reception on Oct. 16, enabling domestic violence advocates to connect with animal shelters to find safe housing for pets until their people are stable and ready to take care of them again. "I'm so excited, because the ease of this website means that we can expand our service area simply by registering new users – domestic violence advocates and 'safe haven' providers – in new regions," says Katz.

## THE LINK... IN THE LEGISLATURES

### *Bills We're Watching... and Laws We're Celebrating:*

#### *Domestic Violence/Pet Protection Orders*



**H.R. 1258 – the Pets And Women's Safety (PAWS) Act** – was re-introduced with a new number and 140 bi-partisan co-sponsors. The bill would expand existing federal domestic violence protections to include pets of domestic violence victims. It would prohibit crossing state lines to harm a domestic partner's pet, and establish a federal grant program to provide assistance and housing to victims' pets in need of emergency shelter. The bill has been assigned to the Judiciary and Agriculture Committees. A companion measure in the Senate – **S. 1559** – has been referred to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry.



**Alaska HB 147** would allow victims to petition the court for a protective order that the abuser may not remove, harm or dispose of any animals in the household, and to grant her exclusive care and custody of them. Peace officers investigating domestic violence cases must inform victims of this provision. The bill would also declare pets to be marital property and give courts authority to decide individual or joint custody when people divorce, with consideration of what would be best for the animal. The bill was held over in the House Judiciary Committee when the Legislature adjourned and will be revisited in January 2016.



**California AB 494 was signed into law on Oct. 1.** It amends Sec. 527.6 of the Code of Civil Procedure and Secs. 213.5 and 15657.03 of the Welfare and Institutions Code to allow courts to issue restraining orders of protective orders to enjoin a person from harming, threatening or

disposing of an animal and to grant a petitioner's request for the exclusive care, possession or control of an animal. Similar provisions currently exist in Sec. 6320 of the California Family Code.



**Michigan SB 28** would make it a crime to knowingly kill, torture, mutilate, maim, disfigure, or poison an animal, or threaten to do so, with the intent of causing mental suffering or distress to a person or to exert control over a person. The bill passed the Judiciary Committee and is in the Committee of the Whole.



**Michigan HB 4478** would allow courts to issue protection-from-abuse orders preventing respondents from injuring, torturing, neglecting, threatening, or removing the petitioner's animals. It would apply to current or former spouses; individuals with whom the petitioner has a child in common or where there has been a dating relationship; or an individual presently or formerly residing in the same household. The bill passed the full House on Oct. 15 by a vote of 96-9 and a Senate Judiciary hearing is scheduled for Dec. 1.



**New Jersey A 494** would provide specific statutory authority to allow courts to include animals in domestic violence restraining orders. The bill affects animals belonging to either party or a minor child in the household. The bill is in the Assembly Women & Children Committee.



**New Mexico S 178 was approved.** It will appropriate \$50,000 per year over six years) to provide temporary safe havens for the animals of domestic violence survivors.



**Oregon HB 3468 was signed into law on July 21** and will take effect next Jan. 1. The new law makes it a Felony C crime of coercion to compel or induce another person to engage in certain conduct by instilling in that person the fear of physical injury being done to an animal.



**Pennsylvania SB 594** would increase penalties for killing, torturing, maiming or poisoning an animal belonging to someone who is protected by a protection-from-abuse order to a \$2,000 - \$15,000 fine and/or two years' imprisonment. The bill is in the House Judiciary Committee.



**Wisconsin** companion bills **AB 141** and **SB 97** would add household pets under the provisions of temporary restraining orders or longer-lasting injunctions that can be issued by courts to protect victims of abuse, harassment or threats. The bills would also allow the petitioner or a designee to retrieve household pets. **SB 97** passed the Senate on May 6. **AB 141** was unanimously approved by the Judiciary Committee on Aug. 20 and was sent to the Rules Committee on Sept. 10.

### *Therapeutic Interventions for Child Abuse Victims*



**Connecticut HB6725** will cause the Dept. of Children & Families to develop and implement training for employees and mental health care providers on animal-assisted therapy and develop a protocol to use such programs to aid children and youth living with trauma and loss. **The bill passed the House and Senate and signed by Gov. Dannel Malloy on July 6.**



**New Jersey A2155** would establish a three-year pilot program within DCF to provide animal-assisted therapy to victims of childhood violence, trauma, or children with behavioral healthcare needs. The bill is in the Assembly Women & Children Committee.

### *Animal Abuse in the Presence of a Child*



**Illinois HB 3231** was signed into law on Aug. 13 and takes effect on Jan. 1, 2016. The measure, Public Act 099-0367, provides for additional penalties when animal cruelty is committed in front of a child. The law is similar to existing Illinois law providing for increased penalties for domestic violence in the presence of a child: both provisions recognize that such trauma can have long-term negative psychological and health consequences for children, and lead them to becoming abusers themselves.



**Massachusetts H3446** would criminalize animal abuse in the presence of a child under age 14 and would increase penalties for such cruelty to up to 10 years in prison and/or a \$10,000 fine. The bill is in the Judiciary Committee.



**New York A534** defines “aggravated” animal cruelty as causing extreme physical pain or done in an especially depraved or sadistic manner, a Class E felony. It would make the commission of aggravated cruelty in the presence of a child a Class D felony. The bill is in the Codes Committee.



**New York A944** and **S1795** would criminalize knowingly causing a minor to attend a place where exhibition of animal fighting is being conducted. The bills are in the Codes Committee.

### *“CASA for Animals”*



**Connecticut HB 6187** would establish a process for appointing an advocate to investigate and advocate for the welfare or custody of animals that are subjects of civil or criminal court proceedings. The bill is in the Joint Committee on the Judiciary and had a public hearing on April 1.



**Massachusetts SB 851** would authorize actions to recover non-economic damages for the injury or death of companion animals and authorize a guardian ad litem to recover damages. The bill is in the Joint Committee on the Judiciary.



**New York AB 3443** would authorize a guardian ad litem to be appointed by a court in tort causes of action for wrongful injury or death of a companion animal. It would also allow restraining orders and other injunctive relief for the wrongful injury or killing of a companion animal. The bill is in the Codes Committee.



**Rhode Island H 5414** would require a court of competent jurisdiction to order the appointment of an animal advocate where the custody or well-being of an animal is at issue. The House Judiciary Committee recommended that the bill be held for further study.

### *Interventions for Animal Abuse Offenders*



**New York A1445** and **S1174** would increase penalties for animal fighting and aggravated cruelty to animals and would require a psychiatric evaluation for defendants convicted of aggravated cruelty. The bills are in the Agriculture Committee.



**New York A1673** and **S814** would require unsealing of court records that juvenile offenders convicted of animal cruelty offenses and require them to undergo psychiatric evaluation and treatment where necessary. The bills are in the Agriculture Committee.

## *Animal Abuse and Other Crimes*



**Michigan HB 4353** would allow animal shelters to consider an individual's criminal history when determining whether or not to allow that individual to adopt an animal. Convicted animal abusers could not adopt for at least 5 years following conviction. The bill is in the Judiciary Committee. **Senate Bill 219** would prohibit offenders convicted of animal fighting or bestiality from owning animals other than livestock for 5 years. The bill was referred to the Committee of the Whole.



After languishing for over a year, **New Jersey SB 736 was signed into law on Aug. 10**. The measure creates a new crime of "leader of a dog fighting network" added to the list of offenses considered "racketeering activities" under New Jersey's anti-racketeering (RICO) law, cleared the Senate on May 18 by a 35-0 vote and the Assembly on June 25 by a 75-0 vote after a series of high-profile dogfighting raids brought the issue's urgency to lawmakers.



**New York A346** would create a statewide task force to study how to improve investigations of animal abuse and enforcement of anti-cruelty laws. The bill is in the Agriculture Committee.



**New York A1596** and **S2936** would expand the definition of aggravated cruelty to animals to include harm to animals during the commission of a felony. The bills are in the Agriculture Committee.



**Ohio SB 195** was introduced on July 16. It would prohibit a person from engaging in sexual conduct with an animal and related acts, provide for the seizure and impoundment of animals, and authorize psychological counseling or evaluation for convicted offenders. The bill is in the Criminal Justice Committee.



The **Oregon** Veterinary Medical Examination Board has proposed Rule No. [875-030-1101](#) which would provide for a screening of applicants and licensees to determine if they have a history of criminal behavior that would preclude their fitness to practice as a veterinarian or certified veterinary technician.



**Vermont S102 was signed into law on June 5 and became effective on July 1**. The measure creates an interdisciplinary task force to evaluate the status of animal cruelty investigation and response in Vermont.

## *Cross Reporting*



**Massachusetts S863** and **H132** would add domestic violence workers, animal control officers and humane officers to the list of mandated reporters of child abuse. **H132** was referred to the Committee on Children, Families and Persons with Disabilities and **S863** is in the Judiciary Committee



**New York A5082** would require anyone mandated to report suspected child abuse who also encounters suspected animal abuse in the course of their duties to make an immediate report to local police or SPCA agencies. Failure to report would be a Class A misdemeanor and civilly liable. An extensive list of medical, social work, therapy, education, camp, day care, counseling and law enforcement professionals are mandated reporters of child abuse. The bill is in the Social Services Committee.



**Oregon HB 2694 was signed into law on May 28.** It allows Department of Human Services regulated social workers to report suspected animal abuse or neglect, with immunity for good-faith reporting. The bill is in the Human Services & Housing Committee.



**Pennsylvania HB 760** would protect veterinarians, certified veterinary technicians and assistants from civil liability if they report suspected cases of animal abuse in good faith to law enforcement authorities. The bill passed the House on Sept. 29 and is currently in the Senate Judiciary Committee.



**Rhode Island HR 5194** would initiate a mandatory child abuse/domestic violence and animal abuse cross-reporting system. The bill has been held for further study in the House Judiciary Committee.

### *Animal Hoarding*



**New York A1265** would create the crime of companion animal hoarding. The bill is in the Assembly Agriculture Committee.

### *Animal Sexual Assault*



**Oregon HB 2693 was signed into law on June 10.** It creates a new misdemeanor crime of encouraging sexual assault of an animal, defined as possessing or controlling a visual recording of a person engaged in sexual conduct with an animal. The crime is punishable by one year's imprisonment and/or \$6,250 in fines. The new law also increases the penalties for sexual assault of an animal, up to five years' imprisonment and/or \$125,000 fine.

## ***THE LINK... IN THE NEWS***

### **Toddler and 17 Animals Removed from Filthy Home**

Sixteen dogs, a macaw, and a toddler were removed from a home in Thibodaux, La. on Oct. 2 after police officers found urine, feces, mold and rotten food throughout a home in deplorable condition. Police charged Ronald Leblanc, 73, Ricky Leblanc, 40, Austin Leblanc, 17, Dakota Leblanc, 21, and Rachel Ledet, 20, with 27 counts of animal cruelty, failure to vaccinate dogs, possession of a vicious dog, and child desertion. Police had gone to the home after a loose dog nearly bit an animal control officer and a nearby resident, the Thibodaux [Daily Comet](#) reported. The child was placed in DCF custody and the animals were removed to the Lafourche Parish Animal Shelter which can house only 13 dogs.



**Thibodaux police released photos of the home**



### **Naked Assaulter Charged with Elder Abuse and Animal Cruelty**

A naked man was arrested on charges of elder abuse, aggravated assault, resisting a police officer and animal cruelty for allegedly attacking a 75-year-old woman while she was walking her dog. Police in Irvine, Calif. say Craig Andrew Ledbetter, 51, knocked Sara Hurtado to the ground and started beating her with a stick. When Hurtado’s dog, “Dukay,” interfered, Ledbetter took the dog by the leash and started spinning it around, [KCAL-TV](#) reported. Dukay fled and was found several hours later near the 405

**Craig Ledbetter**

Freeway. Hurtado was hospitalized with swollen eyes, a dislocated arm and internal bleeding. Ledbetter’s ex-wife told news media that he has been violent before and hopes a restraining order can be put in place against him.

### **SPCA Charges Man with Animal Cruelty and Assault on His Ex-Girlfriend**



Pennsylvania SPCA humane law enforcement officers and Philadelphia police charged Andrew Wallace, 40, of Philadelphia with two counts of animal cruelty, one count of misdemeanor possession of an instrument of crime, and simple assault for allegedly hitting his ex-girlfriend’s dog with a baseball bat. The Oct. 13 incident reportedly injured the dog’s leg severely. “It is the mission of the Pennsylvania SPCA to stop such heinous acts of violence

against animals as evidenced by this case,” CEO Jerry Buckley said in a [press release](#). “Often, links have been drawn between the abuse of animals and violence against people: this seems to be the case here.”



### **Man Charged with Cruelty, Domestic Violence and Child Abuse for Allegedly Decapitating Puppy**

Even a devastating series of storms and floods doesn’t stop abusers from taking out their aggression on animals. Police in Aiken, S. C. responding to a domestic disturbance on Oct. 16 said James Xavier Quattlebaum, 25, allegedly used a large kitchen knife to decapitate a two-week-old puppy while his girlfriend and her two daughters, aged 7 and 10, watched. The girlfriend and daughters told officers that Quattlebaum had arrived home under the influence of narcotics, [the Aiken Standard](#) reported. He was

**James Quattlebaum**

charged with “ill treatment of animals,” domestic violence, unlawful conduct toward a child, damage to city property, and throwing bodily fluids on an officer for allegedly spitting on the police.

## ***LINK TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES***

**Nov. 3-6 – The Hague, The Netherlands:** Yvonne Matser van-'t Oever will present on “Domestic Violence and Animal Abuse as Emotional Blackmail” at the [World Conference of Women’s Shelters](#).

**Nov. 4-5 – Knoxville, Tenn.:** A post-conference workshop on The Link between Human and Animal Violence will be held following the [Veterinary Social Work/Veterinary Health and Wellness Summits](#) at the University of Tennessee. Speakers will include Maya Gupta discussing “Assessment and Treatment of Children and Adults Who Have Engaged In or Witnessed Animal Abuse” and Jenny Edwards speaking on “Bestiality: The Best Kept Secret in America.”

**Nov. 4-6 – Pittsburgh, Pa.:** The Association of Prosecuting Attorneys and Animal Legal Defense Fund will present the [5<sup>th</sup> National Animal Cruelty Prosecution Conference](#) to bring multidisciplinary professionals together to enhance their efforts in combating animal cruelty and related violent crimes.

**Nov. 4-6 – Barcelona, Spain:** The First International Congress of Profiling and Criminal Behavior Analysis in Violent Crimes will be held at the University of Barcelona. Núria Querol will present a plenary session on “CSI Techniques in Crimes against Animals.”

**Nov. 6 – Phoenix, Md.:** The Baltimore County State’s Attorney’s Office Animal Abuse Unit will hold an [Animal Abuse Leadership Summit](#).

**Nov. 6-8 – Byron Bay, N.S.W., Australia:** Catherine Tiplady, Lydia Tong, and seven other speakers will present at the Lucy’s Project: Animals and Domestic Violence Perspectives [conference](#).

**Nov. 11 – (online):** Phil Arkow will present a webinar on Interpersonal Violence and Animal Cruelty for the National Organization for Victim Assistance’s [Victim Assistance Academy](#).

**Nov. 12 – South Padre Is., Texas:** Phil Arkow will train on “Animal Abuse, Elder Abuse, and Hoarding: Challenges and Strategies for Adult Protective Services” at the [32<sup>nd</sup> Annual APS Conference](#).

**Nov. 17– Somerville, N.J.:** Phil Arkow will train New Jersey Division of Child Protection and Permanency staff on the implications of animal abuse in child welfare through the [Child Welfare Training Partnership](#).

**Nov. 23-24 – Barcelona, Spain:** Núria Querol and Sònia Pujol will present a workshop on “The Link and Policing” at the ii Interuniversity Seminar of Criminology, organized by the [Spanish Society of Criminology](#).

**Dec. 1 – Port St. Lucie, Fla.:** Phil Arkow will present on The Link at the Violence Connection conference sponsored by the Pegasus Foundation and the [Spay/Neuter Alliance of the Treasure Coast](#).

**Dec. 4 – San Bernardino, Calif.:** Phil Arkow will speak to the [San Bernardino Animal Cruelty Task Force](#).

**Dec. 9 – Pittsfield, Mass.:** The regular meeting of [HAVEN](#) (Human-Animal Violence Education Network) will be held at the Berkshire Humane Society.

**Dec. 17 – Oklahoma City, Okla.:** [The Oklahoma Link Coalition](#) will hold its bi-monthly meeting and Christmas party.

**Feb. 21, 2016 – Davis, Calif.:** Phil Arkow will present a lunchtime plenary session on The Link at the UC-Davis School of Veterinary Medicine’s annual [Winter Conference](#).

**Feb. 23, 2016 – Newark, N.J.:** Phil Arkow will train New Jersey Division of Child Protection and Permanency staff on the implications of animal abuse in child welfare through the [Child Welfare Training Partnership](#).

**May 6, 2016 – Manahawkin, N.J.:** Phil Arkow will train New Jersey Division of Child Protection and Permanency staff on the implications of animal abuse in child welfare through the [Child Welfare Training Partnership](#).

**May 16, 2016 – New Brunswick, N.J.:** Phil Arkow will train New Jersey Division of Child Protection and Permanency staff on the implications of animal abuse in child welfare through the [Child Welfare Training Partnership](#).

**July 11-13, 2016 – Paris, France:** Phil Arkow will participate in a global exchange examining research and practice aspects of animal abuse and domestic violence at the [International Association of Human-Animal Interaction Organizations’](#) Triennial conference.

**Nov. 4, 2016 -- Phoenix, Md.:** Nancy Blaney will present at the Baltimore County State’s Attorney’s Office Animal Abuse Unit [Animal Abuse Leadership Summit](#).

**To subscribe to The Link-Letter (*it’s free!*) – Just send an e-mail to Coordinator Phil Arkow ([arkowpets@snip.net](mailto: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

#### [Phil Arkow, Coordinator](#)

Consultant, ASPCA  
Chair, Animal Abuse & Family Violence Prevention Project,  
The Latham Foundation  
Stratford, N.J.

#### [Lesley Ashworth](#)

Founder/President, American Veterinary Charitable Fund  
Consultant, Ohio Domestic Violence Network  
Former Director, Domestic Violence/Stalking Program,  
Columbus City Attorney's Office/Prosecution Division  
Blowing Rock, N. Car.

#### [Diane Balkin, J.D.](#)

Contract Attorney, Animal Legal Defense Fund  
Past President, Int'l. Veterinary Forensic Sciences Assn.  
Denver, Colo.

#### [Barbara W. Boat, Ph.D.](#)

Associate Professor, Univ. of Cincinnati College of Medicine  
Exec. Director, Childhood Trust, Cincinnati Children's Hospital  
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#### [Maya Gupta, Ph.D.](#)

Executive Director,  
Animals and Society Institute  
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#### [Jane A. Hunt](#)

Coordinator, Community Health Improvement Plan  
Larimer County Department of Health  
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#### [Mark Kumpf, CAWA](#)

Past President, National Animal Control Association  
Director, Montgomery County Animal Resource Center  
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#### [Randall Lockwood, Ph.D.](#)

Senior Vice Pres., Forensic Sciences & Anti-Cruelty Projects,  
ASPCA  
Falls Church, Va.

#### [Natalie Martinez](#)

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National Adult Protective Services Association  
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Bilingual Domestic Violence Expert, Trainer and Consultant  
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#### [Chris Risley-Curtiss, MSSW, Ph.D.](#)

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Program Manager, Family Violence & Domestic Relations  
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#### [Hugh Tebault III](#)

President,  
The Latham Foundation  
Alameda, Calif.

#### [John Thompson](#)

Deputy Executive Director/Chief of Staff  
National Sheriffs Association  
Director, National Coalition on Violence Against Animals  
Alexandria, Va.