



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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OCTOBER IS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH

Do Pets Help Prevent Suicides Among Abused Women?

While considerable research has addressed the frequent co-occurrence of animal cruelty and intimate partner violence, and how acts or threats of animal cruelty keep battered women fearful of leaving home and thereby trapped in abusive relationships, few studies have examined how pets serve as protective factors for abused women. Amy J. Fitzgerald, Ph.D., an assistant professor of criminology at the University of Windsor, Ontario, addressed this issue in a 2007 study published in the journal *Humanity & Society*.



The study, titled “They gave me a reason to live,” reported that it was not only fear for the animals’ welfare but also the pets’ providing social support to these women that “kept them going” and helped them cope with the abuse. Some participants cited their pets as the reason that they did not end their own lives.

“Pets are uniquely situated to provide social support to some abused woman and can even serve a protective function against suicidality,” wrote Fitzgerald. “In order to adequately address the needs of abused women, particularly related to suicidality, the important roles pets can play in their lives must be taken seriously and, ideally, fostered.”

Abused women tend to be socially isolated and have an increased risk of suicide. They may turn to suicide in an attempt to gain power, have their pain recognized, and extricate themselves from an intolerable situation. Social support has been identified as a critical protective factor, which can be provided by pets who are widely seen by abused women as being members of their family whose relationships also center around mutual protection and fellow suffering, she wrote.

Several of the 26 study participants incorporated these relationships into their “plans of survival,” with a variety of animal species represented. For many women, their dogs served as protectors, keeping them and their children from being physically abused and even attacking the abuser in some cases.

Pets were widely reported to provide emotional and social support, with participants describing them as “the only thing I had,” “they kept me grounded,” and “they were part of my lifeline to stay alive.” Some believed their pets had helped their children cope with the abuse. Ten participants saw similarities between the way their partner treated them, their children and their pets. Nine felt their pets were attuned to their emotions and could provide them with support when it was most needed and would listen to them in ways that people, particularly their partners, could not. Some acquired pets purposefully to fill a void in their lives, or so they would have companionship when they left their abusive partners.

Fitzgerald attributed pets’ insulating effects against suicide to two factors: a sense of responsibility, whereby they fear who would care for their pets after their death; and to providing the emotional and social support these women need to stay alive. Pets, she noted, may be preferable to other family members in some contexts due to their unique characteristics including unconditional regard and unquestioning loyalty.

“Pets may be important sources of social support for abused women not simply because there is no one else there to do so,” she wrote, “but because the support they provide is unique.”

Funding Available for Domestic Violence Pet Shelters



The [American Kennel Club Humane Fund](#), the charitable arm of the dog breed registry American Kennel Club, is accepting applications for Women’s Shelter Grants for domestic violence shelters that permit pets. The grants, up to \$1,000, will be awarded for essential operational support related to the housing of pets or capital improvements specifically for the housing and maintenance of pets. Grants may not be used for fundraising purposes. Applications must be postmarked by Nov. 15.

To be eligible, organizations must be 501c3 nonprofits. They must provide temporary or permanent housing for victims of domestic abuse and their pets, or provide temporary or permanent housing for pets of domestic abuse victims and have a formal, established working relationship with at least one nonprofit shelter for victims of domestic abuse.

Domestic Violence Pet Support Program in Indiana

A new program to provide foster care for the animals of domestic violence survivors is being initiated in Bloomington, Ind. Middle Way PAWSS (Providing Animals and Women with Safe Shelter) is being administered by [Middle Way House](#), Bloomington’s domestic violence and rape crisis center since 1971. Allison Hess reports that PAWSS has a [Facebook](#) page.



Redefining Animal Abuse as an “Adverse Childhood Experience”

Every profession continually revises its own jargon as new issues are defined and clarified. The child welfare field is experiencing such a transition and [Barbara W. Boat, Ph.D.](#), argues that Link advocates should utilize the newest buzzwords and describe violence against animals witnessed or perpetrated by youth as “toxic stress” and “adverse childhood experiences (ACEs).”



Boat, a member of the National Link Coalition’s Steering Committee and a pioneering Link advocate at the University of Cincinnati Children’s Hospital and the Childhood Trust, describes the links between animal abuse, child abuse and domestic violence as a “toxic triad.” These contribute to toxic stress in early childhood that can harm developing brain architecture, result in long-term hyper-responsiveness to perceived threats, and lead to lifelong negative physical and mental health. [Barbara W. Boat, Ph.D.](#)

Acts of animal cruelty witnessed or perpetrated by children are ACEs, she says, referring to a [classic study](#) by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control & Prevention. The 14-year-long study, the largest of its kind ever undertaken, examined the health and social effects of ACEs over the lifespan of 17,337 adults.



The ACES study found staggering proof of health and social risks resulting from childhood trauma

The study included 10 questions that identified such ACEs as whether in childhood the person was insulted or physically or sexually abused; felt unimportant; lacked food or clothes; had parents who were divorced, separated or experienced domestic violence or substance abuse; and had household members who were depressed, mentally ill or incarcerated. Scores were correlated against the development of health problems in later life, with higher numbers of ACEs resulting in a greater likelihood of developing serious health issues. As with most such surveys, children’s exposure to animal abuse was not included.

Boat argues that this should change and that both the positive and negative implications of child-animal interactions should be noted. “We should promote that experiences with animals are important to evaluate as both an Adverse Experience that can contribute to Toxic Stress and as a means to reduce the impact of Toxic Stress,” she says.

Clinicians, social workers, and others working with children should routinely obtain information about children’s experiences with animals because these offer “a window on their world.” In addition, asking questions about animals reduces children’s inhibitions about talking to an interviewer. Pets share the same environments as children, and kids will often talk about their pets before they will talk about themselves. Children can develop lifelong fears about animals that clinicians can treat. And the high incidence of dog bites among children (50% of all dog bites and 70% of fatalities), plus the presence of dangerous-breed dogs as a high risk factor for deviant behavior, must not be overlooked, she says.

“Knowledge of animal cruelty histories might help us discriminate between children with severe and destructive conduct disorders and those with milder, non-destructive conduct disorders, and might flag who are at risk for abusive experiences,” she says. “The more we know about these kids, the more it can inform treatment.”

Avoiding Confidentiality Constraints in Cross-Reporting

A common obstacle facing child protection personnel, social workers and other human services officials who encounter suspected animal maltreatment is how to report it within professional and institutional confidentiality restrictions that protect the professional/client relationship. One such solution is to enable or permit such cross-reporting through statutory relief.



Massachusetts is one of several states that have addressed this issue in recent years. New legislation created a [new statute \(Chap. 119, Sec. 85\)](#) that specifically addresses “department employees reporting animal cruelty, abuse or neglect.” In Massachusetts, any child protection employee or contractor who, when acting in an official capacity or within the scope of employment, has knowledge of known or reasonably suspicious animal cruelty, abuse or neglect, may report it to humane societies, SPCAs or animal control authorities. There is no civil or criminal liability if the report is made in good faith.

Similar laws permitting child welfare officials to report suspected animal abuse exist in California, Maine and Oregon. Five states (Connecticut, Louisiana, Nebraska, Tennessee and West Virginia) mandate these reports of suspected animal abuse to be made.

British Vets Endorse Link Cross-Reporting

The British Veterinary Association (BVA) has endorsed the concept that veterinarians have a responsibility to intervene not only when animal abuse is suspected, but when other forms of family violence are suspected as well.



BVA has endorsed the publication of *Recognising Abuse in Animals in Humans: Guidance for Veterinary Surgeons and Other Veterinary Employees* (see [LINK-Letter, September 2012](#)), originally published in 2012 by [The Links Group UK](#) and [re-issued by BVA in 2013](#). In addition, BVA has published [information on its website](#) noting that while it is not mandatory in the UK for veterinarians to report suspected animal abuse cases that are admittedly complex and problematic, “Every practice should have a protocol for staff to follow when a case gives rise to suspicions of abuse. Since early intervention may prevent further abuse it is essential that the possibility of abuse is recognized,” the BVA says.

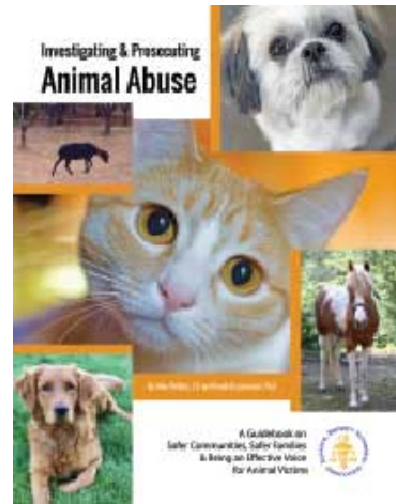
“Beyond non-accidental injury (NAI) in animals, veterinary surgeons will be aware that abuse is perpetrated in a number of relationships: child abuse, domestic violence and abuse of older people. Increasingly it has come to be recognised that there are complex interrelationships within these abnormal relationships and animals may be part of the equation too.

“Over the last 10 years, it has become apparent that veterinary surgeons must become an essential part of the team required to break the cycle of abuse and a cross-reporting mechanism has been established so that suspicions of abuse whether to animal, adult or child may be reported to the relevant body,” the BVA advises.

New Resource Offered for Prosecutors and Law Enforcement

Crimes against animals, which often co-occur with crimes against human members of the family and the community, are often the most challenging cases for law enforcement officials to investigate and for prosecutors to bring to trial. A new 78-page monograph presents extensive guidelines, ideas, strategies and resources for criminal justice officials to inspire safer communities and families.

Investigating & Prosecuting Animal Abuse, written by Allie Phillips and Randall Lockwood, is an expansion of Lockwood's 2006 monograph on a similar topic. The update identifies 10 essential attributes for successful investigation and prosecution of crimes against animals; provides resources to help courts assess offenders' risk for perpetrating other crimes; categorizes different types of animal abuse; presents options for holding and disposing of neglected and abandoned animals; and describes links between animal abuse and other crimes including animal fighting and racketeering.



Extensive checklists are offered for investigating different types of animal abuse cases and for building a prosecution. Guidelines are presented for preparing a case, filing pre-trial motions, taking a case to trial, selecting juries, and responding to the most commonly offered defenses. Two comprehensive chapters address the issues of plea agreements and juvenile offenders in cruelty cases.

Phillips and Lockwood make particular point of the community response to animal abuse cases, an impact for which many prosecutors are not prepared. Prosecutors are encouraged to recognize the high levels of frustration in many communities over a perceived lack of enforcement of anti-cruelty laws, and are advised to be prepared to have a packed courtroom of animal advocates and more intense media interest than normally occur with other criminal cases.

Prosecutors are advised to take these cases seriously because animal abuse is a crime, a predictor crime, an indicator crime, and a destabilizer of communities. "Paying attention to the victimization of animals can often lead to the discovery of people who have been harmed by the same perpetrator, or who are at high risk of being harmed," they write. "Animal abuse investigators and humane law enforcement agents are now seen as important sentinels for detecting many forms of abuse."

They encourage prosecutors to treat animal cruelty cases like homicide cases, as both have in common the absence of a victim who can testify and often must be tried solely on the basis of circumstantial evidence. They encourage prosecutors to meet the surviving animal victims personally prior to trial, similar to meeting child victims, as a way to gain vigor in pursuing the case.

To law enforcement and court officials who say they have more important cases to deal with, Phillips and Lockwood respond, "When you hold animal abusers accountable, you can prevent other crime and begin to change a community in regards to safety."

The monograph was published by the National District Attorneys Association's National Center for Prosecution of Animal Abuse and is available as a free download on both the [NDAA](#) and [National Link Coalition](#) websites.

Unique Link Partnership Helps Animals and Fights Crime



Lt. Andi Taylor and Matthew Pepper

combat animal neglect and violence, Pepper and Taylor told the [2013 New Mexico Conference on The Link](#).

It all started with a cow. A cow named Ferdinand needed to be rescued after its mother was killed and it was left to starve to death on a mesa outside Albuquerque, N. Mex. The incident brought [Matthew Pepper](#), Director of Bernalillo County Animal Care Services, and [Lt. Andi Taylor](#), of the Bernalillo County Sheriff's Office, together. After resolving the immediate situation, they realized that their organizations needed to work together more closely and systematically to address similar situations.

Thus in 2012 P.E.T.— the Proactive Enforcement Team – was born. BCSO deputies and BCAS officers were cross-trained, learned to work together, and abandoned their egos to operate as a team to

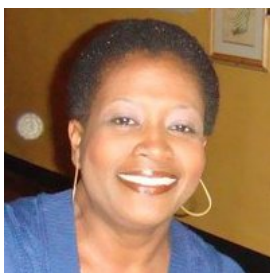
“Most deputies think all animal care officers want to be cops. Animal care officers think cops are mindless when it comes to animal behavior and treatment,” said Taylor. Collaboration works, Pepper said, “Because there are no egos, it’s a common endgame for everyone, it’s productive, and it helps everyone meet their goals.”

The partnership has resulted in a drastic decrease in the number of dogs shot by deputies, an increase in the number of BCAS officers asking the BCSO for assistance, and increased news media support. The departments collaborate on neighborhood sweeps of high-crime areas, with deputies and officers going block-by-block checking for violations and issuing citations and making immediate arrests. “Cops should be proactively looking for crimes, not just reacting through calls for service,” said Taylor. “Having cops and animal care officers converging on a neighborhood is a tremendously effective crime deterrent.”

In addition to animal abuse cases, the sweeps frequently uncover gang violence, domestic violence, child abuse, and narcotics trafficking. “It’s alarming what you find,” she added.

The partnership likewise benefits BCAS. “The sweeps are not only good for the animals but also let the community know that the two departments are working together. Animal Care is now seen as a presence and a resource rather than as an authority,” said Pepper.

“We feel like we’re doing something. The collaboration is amazing,” said Taylor, encouraging other law enforcement agencies to work closely with their animal control agencies. “If you want to reduce crime pay attention to the animals,” she said.



Michele Robinson Joins NLC Steering Committee

Michele Robinson has been named the new representative from the [National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges](#) to serve on the National Link Coalition’s Steering Committee. Michele is a Program Manager in the Family Violence and Domestic Relations Program. Her primary area of expertise is in Supervised Visitation and Exchange, which carries over into protective orders, child support enforcement, and family court areas of concern.

Special Prosecution Units Formed in Florida

Citing evidence linking animal cruelty to other crimes, State Attorney Ed Brodsky has formed a new special prosecution unit to focus on animal abuse crimes more vigorously in Manatee and Sarasota Counties, Fla. Brodsky ran for office on a campaign to address crimes that were under-reported or receiving little attention, including animal cruelty, violent crimes and fraud against the elderly. The [Bradenton Herald reported](#) that Brodsky has initiated three teams of prosecutors who will be involved in investigations, offer investigative and legal training, keep track of repeat offenders, and inform judges of offenders' patterns. Animals are a "vulnerable group in society. We already had a division for child abuse so it was only natural for us to do one for the elderly and for the animals," said Assistant State Attorney Lisa Chittaro.



State Attorney Ed Brodsky

Link Included in Animal Welfare Curriculum



A brief section on animal cruelty and its links to interpersonal violence is included in *Concepts of Animal Welfare*, a massive syllabus designed to incorporate animal welfare awareness into university-level education. The syllabus was originally published in 2003 by the World Society for the Protection of Animals and the University of Bristol School of Veterinary Science in the UK. The 3rd edition, published in 2013, contains 35 modules, student learning activities and a toolbox of resources. Topics cover a diverse array of ethical and practical issues including agri- and aqua-culture management, animal welfare and religion, veterinary disaster management, measurement and assessment of animal welfare, behavioral components of animal well-being, and working animal issues.

Module 30 on "Human-Animal Interactions" contains a very brief PowerPoint on how domestication of animals resulted in humans' bonds with pets, how we perceive our animal companions, the medical benefits and therapeutic uses of the human-animal bond, and how animal abuse also affects women and children. An introduction to the issues of animal hoarding and the veterinarian's role in recognizing animal abuse are also included.

The entire curriculum is available free of charge, in whole or in part, on the [Animal Mosaic website](#). The goal is to enable veterinary schools to include the challenging topic of animal welfare in coursework. Earlier editions have been translated into six languages and are in use in over 750 faculties in 23 countries. It is also applicable to other higher education courses.

"The World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) has recommended that animal welfare is a 'Day 1 Competency' and should therefore become a fundamental pillar in veterinary training, ensuring that all graduating vets the world over qualify with a sound understanding of the subject," the syllabus notes.

The Link in the Literature

Are Female Animal Abusers Different?

While the overwhelming majority of intentional animal abuse perpetrators are men, the majority of animal hoarders (and animal rescuers) are women. Joni E. Johnston, Psy. D., who writes regularly on “The Human Equation” for *Psychology Today*, described psychopathic females who abuse animals and noted that female animal abusers may, in comparison to men, be more deviant than their non-violent peers. Female animal abusers were far more likely to be bullies or to have been bullied than non-abusing women, to have histories of victimization themselves, and to have witnessed an authority abuse an animal. The link between animal cruelty and interpersonal violence is also present in women, although perhaps not to the extent that it is for men. While rates of animal abuse among women are far less than among men, when females deliberately harm animals they can be just as cruel and as calculating as men.

-- Johnston, J.E. (2012, July 2). Female animal abusers: Are they different? *Psychology Today*.

In a study of 29 self-reported animal abusing college students, Rebecca Schwartz and colleagues at West Virginia University reported that animal abusers had more criminal behaviors, were more likely to bully, and had higher scores on the power orientation criminal thinking scales compared to non-abusers. Gender variations were detected: female animal abusers scored significantly higher on several measures of criminal thinking, were more likely to bully, and exhibited lower scores on measures of perspective taking and empathy compared to female controls.

-- Schwartz, R.L., Fremouw, W., Schenk, A., & Ragatz, L.L. (2012). Psychological profile of male and female animal abusers. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence, 27*(5), 846-861.

A “One Health” Look at Domestic Violence and Animal Abuse

The One Health movement, which explores the commonalities linking veterinary and human medicine, recognizes the impact of animal abuse on human welfare, particularly in the areas of domestic violence and child maltreatment. In this new book in the Palgrave MacMillan Animal Ethics series, Aysha Akhtar, M.D., MPH, a double Board-certified neurologist and public health specialist, devotes Chapter 2 to “Victims of Abuse: Making the Connection.” Other chapters address the relevance of animal welfare to our health, the global trade in wildlife, animal agriculture, animal experimentation, and a new model for public health.

-- Akhtar, A. (2012). *Animals and Public Health: Why Treating Animals Better is Critical to Human Welfare*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan.



An “Ombudswoman” for Animals

British barrister Noël Sweeney uses the English common law history of women and children having once been considered “property” to argue that animals, who are similarly abused and exploited, are deserving of legal representation in court cases. He argues that the institution of ombudsman – a court-appointed position created in Sweden in 1809 and adopted in the U.K. in 1966 to protect the general and individual rights of the people – should be extended to animals. “Animals need a legal watchdog for the underdog,” he writes, and this position should ideally be an “ombudswoman.”

-- Sweeney, N. (2013, Oct. 4). An animals’ ombudswoman. *Criminal Law and Justice Weekly, 177*(39).

Resources for Researchers

Researchers seeking either scholarly journals or mainstream publications with articles about animal abuse and its links with human violence are often frustrated, due to the multi-disciplinary nature of The Link, the obscurity or antiquity of some publications, and the challenge of finding appropriate key words to search. However, several key resources are available.

The National Link Coalition maintains an ongoing bibliography of over 900 academic and popular publication citations, organized in a typology of professional disciplines: child development, domestic violence, elder abuse, veterinary forensics, criminology, law enforcement and prosecution, and psychological/social work assessment and treatment. Specific topics such as bullying, animal hoarding, bestiality, rehabilitation programs and community coalitions are also included. The Bibliography is available on the <http://www.animaltherapy.net/Bibliography-Link.html> website.

The U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Justice Programs maintains an enormous collection of abstracts in its National Criminal Justice Reference Service. Go to the [NCJRS website](#) and enter "animal cruelty" in the search box and 11 pages of references will be displayed.

NEWS FROM LINK COALITIONS

New Coalition Started on Nantucket

Nantucket Island, Massachusetts, is the latest area to launch a community coalition linking human and animal services agencies in coordinated prevention and response programs to animal abuse and other forms of family violence. The group coalesced at a training program conducted by Allie Phillips, who reports that while it took three years to raise interest the participating organizations are now eager to work together.



Charter participants include A Safe Place, the island's child abuse and domestic violence organization, which is raising funds for a program for foster care of domestic violence survivors' pets; Nantucket Safe Harbor, the island's animal shelter; a mental health therapist; the island's only animal control officer; and the police department.

The coalition does not yet have a name nor a website. Coordinating the effort is [Kristen Brock](#), Senior Advocate and Case Manager at A Safe Place.

Maine Coalition Launches Law Enforcement Training

Maine's pioneering [Linkage Project](#) has been busy at work completing an online training program for Maine's first responders and law enforcement personnel. Thanks to support from a STOP grant, the ASPCA and A Kinder World, over 150 participants have already completed the training since it was rolled out in June and July, says Tonya DiMillo, Linkage Project coordinator.



New Mexico Forms Positive Links -- for the 9th time



Tammy Fiebelkorn (left), organizer of the Annual New Mexico conference, meets with Barbara W. Boat and Tamara Ward who were two of the many authorities who gave presentations at the conference.

Between Child and Animal Abuse,” “Animal Fighting and The Link,” “Animal Hoarding,” “Operational and Veterinary Aspects of a Protective Custody Shelter,” “Investigating Cruelty,” and “Inter-Link Agency Partnerships.” A facilitated brainstorming session inspired participants to consider creating a briefing paper that will help various professional groups to understand and overcome the confidentiality rules affecting cross-reporting of suspected abuse to other agencies. One participant summed up concept behind The Link very succinctly: “If you could stop violence where it starts, would you?”

Over 250 child welfare professionals, animal advocates, domestic violence officials, law enforcement officers, veterinarians and others interested in stopping violence by

addressing The Link met at the National Hispanic Cultural Center in Albuquerque on Sept. 16th for the 9th New Mexico Conference on The Link. Eleven presentations addressed how the agendas of humane and human services can be advanced more effectively through species-spanning services and systems.

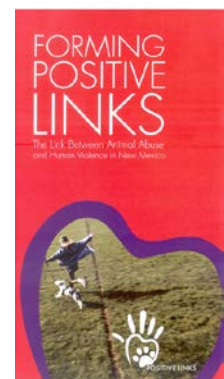
Workshops included “The Links



A rousing panel discussion reviewed New Mexico’s progress in addressing The Link.

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The New Mexico Forming Positive Links Committee has a new brochure. [Click here to see it.](#)

KC-CAN Reaches Out to Animal Control Officers, Child Welfare



Heddie Leger

Our Kansas City LINK Coalition – KC-CAN, the Caring for All Network – is conducting a series of training programs for the [Kansas Animal Control Association](#). Heddie Leger reports she gave a training presentation to more than 30 animal control officers in September and raised significant interest in The Link. Several animal control officers asked for additional presentations to their animal control and police departments: Heddie reports that three more presentations are scheduled between now and the beginning of 2014.

Meanwhile, Teresa Bradley Bays, DVM, coordinator of KC-CAN, and Midge Grinstead handed out brochures and gave a presentation at the September meeting of the Child Abuse Roundtable. Since 2002, the [Kansas City Child Abuse Roundtable Coalition](#) – a group of advocates and elected officials representing 30 agencies in Missouri and Kansas – has been joining together to promote awareness of child maltreatment and the availability of prevention, training and treatment services in the metro area. Teresa reports that 43 attendees from a variety of children’s organizations warmly received KC-CAN.



Teresa Bradley Bays

Bar Association Discusses Implementation of Pet Protection Orders

On September 10th, the Massachusetts Bar Association's Animal Law Practice Group hosted a forum on Pets in Protective Orders: Using the New Law to Protect both Pets and People. The goal of the program was to present attendees with information about the Link between animal abuse and domestic violence, the new law that allows pets to be included in court-issued protective orders, how the law has been applied so far, and practical and practice tips for cases that involve pets.



State Sen. Katherine Clark, who filed the amendment that passed into law last year to allow pets to be included in protective orders, spoke about the significance of the legislature's passage of this law and thanked everyone for their work on this issue. Martha Grace, retired Chief Justice of the Massachusetts Juvenile Court, talked about her efforts to educate judges about the Link.

Faith Szczurko, a SAFEPLAN advocate, and animal control officers Deni Goldman (who was involved in the first order issued under this new law) and Sue Webb (who runs the [Safe People Safe Pets](#) program that provides foster care for animals) spoke about their firsthand experiences with this issue generally and the new law.

The Women's Bar Foundation is working with the Wilmer Hale law firm to provide guidance to help implement the new law; Dara Goodman presented the firm's progress on producing a guidance document. Their goal is to figure out what would be persuasive to a judge in these cases, particularly in cases challenged by limited judicial treatment, the impact of divorce, and determining what is a domesticated animal. Her presentation and a draft affidavit are available online from the [MSPCA](#).

Kara Holmquist of the MSPCA also reports that the attendees also networked, with new connections being made and talk of working to implement the [SAF-T program](#) in a Massachusetts shelter.

THE LINK IN THE NEWS

Animal Cruelty Investigation Uncovers Domestic Violence



An investigation into animal abuse resulted in a Portland, Ore. man pleading guilty to domestic violence charges for also attacking his ex-girlfriend. Travis Warner-Tamerius confessed to repeatedly slapping and punching a two-year-old cat. During that investigation, police told [KGW-TV](#) reporters that they found evidence of domestic violence. He subsequently pleaded guilty to aggravated animal abuse and domestic violence assault. An Oregon Humane Society veterinarian trained in veterinary forensics concluded that the cat's injuries, which included a face so swollen that she could not eat or drink, were caused by multiple traumatic blows.

Travis Warner-Tamerius After seven days of intensive treatment the cat was reported healed and was later adopted. Warner-Tamerius is scheduled to be sentenced Nov. 13.

"Cases like this remind us that we too often see violence against animals going hand-in-hand with violence against people," said Sharon Harmon, Executive Director of the humane society.

Animal Cruelty Case Leads to Domestic Violence, Child Abuse Charges



An animal control officer rescued the starving dog

An investigation into a report of an emaciated dog led Fort Lauderdale, Fla. police to cases of alleged domestic violence and child abuse. Police investigating a starving Doberman pinscher found D'Anthony Dontrel Davis, 23, living with Sherene Marie Walker, 22. Davis was arrested after a background search revealed that he had outstanding charges of oxycodone possession, resisting arrest, trespassing, and violation of a domestic violence injunction from an earlier incident in Polk County. Davis had also faced charges for aggravated battery on a pregnant woman and domestic battery by strangulation, which were later dropped, and for drugs. Walker, who was tending to the dog and her infant daughter, was charged with disorderly conduct, resisting arrest, aggravated child abuse, and contributing to the delinquency of a minor, the [Broward/Palm Beach New Times](#) reported.

Murder Charges Filed in Case with Suspicious Link to Horse and Human Deaths

Police have charged a Seneca County, N.Y. man with second-degree murder in connection with the suspicious deaths of his son, his first wife, and a fire that killed his Belgian draft horses, all of which resulted in his receiving hefty insurance payouts. Karl Karlsen, 52, was charged after his second wife, Cindy, agreed to wear a wire and talk to her husband about the suspicious death of his son in 2008 who was crushed to death when the pickup truck he was working on suddenly slipped off its jack. Karl Karlsen received a \$700,000 life insurance payout after the incident, part of which he invested in a \$1.2 million life insurance policy on Cindy, the [Associated Press](#) reported.

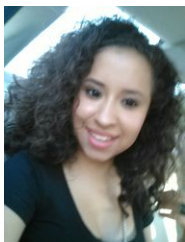


Karl Karlsen

Karlsen's first wife, Christina, died in a suspicious kerosene-fueled house fire in 1991, shortly after Karl Karlsen took out a \$200,000 insurance policy on her. Karlsen also collected \$80,000 in insurance money after a 2002 fire in his barn killed his horses.

After being interrogated by police for 9-¹/₂ hours and denying killing his son 75 times, Karlsen signed a statement acknowledging he had knocked the truck off its jack and walked away. He later pleaded not guilty to the charges, saying the incidents were all coincidences. Trial is scheduled for next month.

Dog Killed in Abduction of Teenaged Girl



Ayvani Perez

A 14-year-old girl who was abducted from her Ellenwood, Ga. home in an apparent robbery attempt was found safe and unharmed several miles away, but the family's dog was killed in the kidnapping. Ayvani Perez was [reported](#) to be in good health and reunited with her family. The FBI identified two suspects in custody as Juan Alberto Rodriguez, a Mexican national being held on immigration charges, and Wildrego Jackson, of Atlanta, who had been released from state prison in 2007 on drug charges and from Fulton County Jail earlier this year on charges including aggravated stalking and theft-by-receiving. Several men wearing black clothing pried open the back door of the home at 2:15 a.m. in an apparent random home invasion. The robbers found Ayvani, her mother, brother and dog hiding in a closet. When they demanded money and jewelry and were told there were none, and the dog jumped from Ayvani's arms and began barking at the intruders, they allegedly shot the dog and abducted the teen. Police were still investigating and looking for additional suspects.

Two Girls Charged with Arson in Retaliation for Dog's Death



Two girls, ages 12 and 14, whose Rottweiler reportedly mauled their neighbors' two-year-old son, were charged with arson for allegedly burning the home of the victim's family in retaliation for the loss of the dog, who had to be euthanized. The two-story home of Jason and Victoria Johnson on the Bloodvein First Nation reserve 200 miles north of Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, burned to the ground in June, destroying all their possessions. The following day the RCMP arrested the two girls. Less than two weeks earlier, their son was mauled by the dog and had to be airlifted to Winnipeg for treatment. The

incident was the sixth case of arson in the community this year, the [Winnipeg Free Press](#) reported.

Man Sentenced to Jail and Probation for Killing Girlfriend's Dog

Manuel Liziola, of San Diego, Calif., pleaded guilty on Sept. 5 to a misdemeanor count of animal abuse in the killing of his girlfriend's Chihuahua, Praline. A necropsy determined that the dog died of blunt force trauma to the abdomen. Liziola will serve six months in jail, three years of probation, and is barred from owning an animal for three years. "Unfortunately, animals are often the victims of abuse in domestic disputes, and we see this all too often," said Randy Lawrence, director of humane law enforcement for the [San Diego Humane Society and SPCA](#) which investigated the case.

Link Cited in Response to Beheading of Two Puppies

Citing the potential that "an act of unprovoked violence toward such helpless victims often indicates a severe behavioral or mental health problem that needs to be addressed," Maya Gupta, Ph.D., of the National Link Coalition's steering committee had a [letter to the editor](#) published in the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*. The letter was in response to the case of Robert Davis, charged with aggravated animal cruelty for allegedly [beheading two pit bull puppies](#) he and his girlfriend were babysitting. Davis was also charged with tampering with evidence for reportedly burying the dogs' bodies. "A combination of a lack of empathy and lack of impulse control might well manifest itself in other ways," wrote Gupta.



Robert Davis

Woman Spurns Man – He Kills her Dog



Charles A. Zidek

Charles A. Zidek, 37, of Ellisville, Mo. was convicted in St. Charles County Circuit Court on felony charges of animal abuse and burglary for retaliating against his ex-girlfriend by breaking into her home and throwing her dog repeatedly against a wall so viciously that it had to be euthanized. "This is incredibly vile and cruel torture towards a helpless animal because a woman had the nerve to tell him she didn't want anything to do with him again," the prosecutor told the jury. Daina Walkonis testified that she and Zidek had dated occasionally for two years and had broken up several months before the incident. She agreed to go to a wedding reception with him the night before the attack but left in a taxi because he was drinking excessively, the [St. Louis Post-Dispatch reported](#). Zidek was sentenced Sept. 30 to eight years in prison.

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.

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** passed the House and was in the Senate Judiciary Committee when the legislature adjourned.

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.

Domestic Violence/Pet Protection Orders



Ohio HB 243 and SB 177 would allow courts to include companion animals in domestic violence, anti-stalking and temporary protection orders. **HB 243** 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.



Michigan SB 286 would amend the Code of Criminal procedure's sentencing guidelines, which are based on point scores that consider offense variables and prior record, to assign points for killing or torturing of animals that result in serious psychological injury to the animal's owner

requiring professional treatment, or that exploits a domestic relationship for selfish or unethical purposes. The bill would also require points for animal cruelty that is in violation of a personal protection order. The bill was scheduled for a third reading in the Senate.



New Jersey A 916 would authorize courts to include animals in domestic violence restraining orders. The bill is in the Assembly Judiciary Committee.

Animal Hoarding



Pennsylvania HB 860 would establish a new crime of animal hoarding, a third-degree misdemeanor, and require a psychological evaluation prior to sentencing. The bill is in the Judiciary Committee.

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.

Link Training Opportunities

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. 15 – Sarasota, Fla.: Nancy Bell and Debbie Mims will present on “Linking Acts of Cruelty to Animals and Violence Toward Humans” at the 44th Annual [Southern States Crime Prevention Training Conference](#).

Oct. 22 – Meridian, Miss.: Sharon Grace, DVM will discuss “Pets – the Forgotten Victims” at Care Lodge’s [19th Annual Conference on Domestic Violence](#) at Mississippi State University.

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 “Animal Cruelty and Human Violence,” at the 65th Annual [Conference of Southwest Foundations](#).

Oct. 25 – Baltimore, Md.: [Allie Phillips](#) will present on Sheltering Animals & Families Together (SAF-T) in a Roundtable on The Health Impact & Legal Ramifications of Animals at the University of Baltimore School of Law.

Oct. 30 – Parsippany, N.J.: The Career Development Institute will offer a [training for animal control officers](#) and cruelty investigators on “The Challenges in Investigating a Domestic Violence Case.”

Nov. 1 – Lake Charles, La.: Randy Lockwood will deliver a keynote on The Link, and a panel will discuss cross-reporting issues, at the 5th Annual [Preventing Family Violence Workshop](#).

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](#).

Mar. 22, 2014 – Austin, Texas: Phil Arkow will present on how The Link can be used to “Learn What the Monster Likes and Feed it” at the [Texas Unites for Animals](#) conference.

April 22, 2014 – Seattle, WA: Allie Phillips will present on The Link and sheltering pets of domestic violence survivors at the [International Conference on Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence & Trafficking](#).

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.

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Chair, Animal Abuse & Family Violence Prevention Project,
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