



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



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[Phil Arkow](#), Editor

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ANIMAL ABUSE AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

ASPCA Grant Funds Position Opening in New York City Program

URIPALS

People and Animals Living Safely

New York City's groundbreaking Urban Resource Institute [URIPALS](#) (People and Animals Living Safely) program (see *LINK-Letter* June, 2013), providing co-sheltering for human and animal survivors of domestic violence in the nation's largest city, has [posted a job opening](#) for a

Program Coordinator. The coordinator will be responsible for day-to-day operations and growth of PALS and its intervention, counseling, advocacy, education and coordination programs to meet clients' needs.

The position is made possible through a \$75,000 grant from the ASPCA in a collaboration to help ensure that both clients and pets in New York receive the support and services they need to heal and move forward with their lives. To preserve the special bond that is even more critical during times of crisis, the ASPCA will also offer medical exams, vaccinations, behavioral support, spay and neuter surgery, and fostering at its animal hospital, and support from its Cruelty Intervention Advocacy team.

URI launched URIPALS in June, 2013 as a pilot program, modifying apartments at the largest of its four emergency shelters to accommodate families' pets. To date, the program has housed more than a dozen cats and other small animals and is being expanded to accommodate dogs.

URIPALS has also developed a creative pet safety plan for domestic violence survivors that includes all members of the family:

Pet-care plan: Identify in advance friends or family members who can help care for your pet(s).

Animal ownership documents: Keep registration records, vet records, microchip and current photo to prove ownership of your pets.

Legal protection: Include pets on orders of protection. Give a copy of any legal documents to a trusted friend or family member.

Safety supplies: Pack an emergency bag and keep it hidden, but easily accessible. Make sure to include food, supplies and records for pets in the emergency bag.

Victory in Virginia for Pet Protection Order Law

The Commonwealth of Virginia has become the 24th state to enact legislation allowing courts to include animals in domestic violence protection-from-abuse orders. On March 3, the General Assembly passed HB 972 which had earlier passed the House by a 99-0 vote and the Senate by a vote of 39-0. The new statute grants the petitioner or the person on whose behalf the order is issued the possession of any companion animal if such person meets the definition of owner. Provisions apply to preliminary, emergency and regular protective orders and to protective orders in cases of family abuse involving an incarcerated or recently incarcerated respondent. Violations are considered contempt of court.



Pet protection orders (PPOs) have become increasingly popular since they were first enacted in Maine in 2006. Puerto Rico has also enacted a similar PPO law.

Third Online Directory of Domestic Violence Pet Programs Launched

The Animal Welfare Institute has created an online site where domestic violence survivors can find women's shelters that have "Safe Haven" arrangements with community organizations to provide temporary foster care for their pets. The [Safe Havens Mapping Project](#) lists some 1,423 such programs.

The [directory of Safe Haven programs](#) is searchable by state and by ZIP Code, enabling survivors to locate programs in their immediate area or in other parts of the country if they wish to relocate away from their abuser. The site includes a disclaimer noting that these programs are constantly changing and survivors need to contact the agencies listed directly to determine that the programs are still operational.



The directory, which is updated periodically, includes off-site foster care utilizing local animal shelters, veterinarians and networks of foster homes, and on-site facilities built on the domestic violence shelter's premises. Depending on local arrangements, families in shelters may be able to visit their pets while they are in safekeeping. Length of stay varies widely. All programs are encouraged to maintain confidentiality to protect the animals as well as the human members of the family from their abusers.

The AWI website also includes such resources as links to Frank Ascione's original [Safe Havens manual](#); Allie Phillips' Sheltering Animals and Families Together (SAF-T) [publications](#); opportunities for funding domestic violence pet sheltering programs; and information on domestic violence pet protection orders.

The AWI directory joins two similar lists. The RedRover [Safe Place for Pets website](#) (*see LINK-Letter January 2014*) is a searchable online directory of domestic violence pet support programs, coupled with [Safe Escape grants](#) for temporary boarding and veterinary care to enable survivors to remove pets to safety and Safe Housing grants to help domestic violence shelters construct on-site kennels. [The SAF-T website](#) (*see LINK-Letter February 2012*) includes a start-up manual to help organizations join the 89 domestic violence shelters in the U.S., Canada and Australia that provide pet sheltering facilities on-site.

Pet Safety Programs Come to The Netherlands

The City of Amsterdam is embarking upon a pioneering program, modeled after many similar programs in the U.S., to provide refuge for pets who are victims of domestic violence. The city council has earmarked €20,000 on a pilot project. During the trial period, dogs and cats will be sheltered for two weeks, giving the human survivor some time to find alternative accommodations for her animals. The trial will run for six months and be evaluated in June, according to the [Dutch News](#) service.



Dutch studies similar to those in the U.S., New Zealand, Canada, and the U.K. find that fear for animals' welfare is a disincentive for domestic violence victims to leave. 55% of Dutch female domestic violence victims say their animals were targeted, hurt or killed.

Meanwhile, other similar programs are emerging in The Netherlands. [Marie-Jose Enders-Slegers](#) reports that the Circle of Violence Association ("Cirkel van Geweld") has received a foundation grant to provide foster care for animal victims of violence across the nation. Other networks of foster care families, police, social workers and government officials are being established in Zaanstreek, as well as in the north and south of the nation.

ANIMAL ABUSE AND HUMAN CRIMES

Summary Fact Sheet for Police Compiled

What do local police, sheriffs, court personnel and victim advocates need to know about animal cruelty? How do Link advocates convince law enforcement that animal crimes affect human safety and that the old arguments that "boys will be boys" and "it's only an animal" are no longer valid? What information would be useful to law enforcement to inform their understanding of how animal abuse and neglect affect the populations they serve?



To help answer these questions, the National Link Coalition has compiled a new fact sheet. [The Link and Law Enforcement](#) is a summary report explaining the significance of animal-related crimes with several key statements by experts in the field and a look at animal cruelty "by the numbers."

The report is our newest entry in our free online [National Resource Center](#) on the Link between Animal Abuse and Human Violence. Feel free to use it but please give credit to the National Link Coalition.

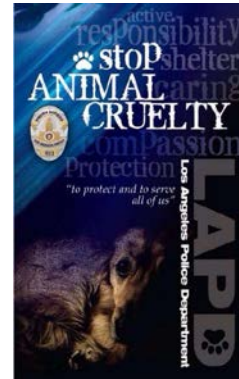
Why Should Law Enforcement Take Animal Abuse Seriously?

"The topic of animal cruelty may seem unimportant in the face of events like the Boston bombing, school shootings, and other recent tragedies, but we know there's a history of animal cruelty in the backgrounds of many perpetrators of violent acts. Understanding this link between animal cruelty and interpersonal violence is critical to the Department."

-- Mary Leary, Acting Assistant Attorney General,
U.S. Department of Justice Office of Justice Programs
in establishing the US DOJ Working Group on Animal Cruelty Apr. 30, 2013

LAPD Task Force Rooted in Link Philosophy

One of the oldest police agency programs to combat animal abuse is rooted in the recognition of the strong correlation between those who commit acts of animal cruelty and those who commit acts of violence against humans. The Los Angeles Police Department's Animal Cruelty Task Force, inaugurated in 2005, was founded upon a goal of breaking the cycle of violence through aggressive prevention, intervention, detection, and prosecution of animal abuse.



A collaborative effort between the LAPD and the Department of Animal Services, the ACTF relies heavily upon veterinary forensics and prosecution efforts of the



Citizens' video evidence was used to bring charges

Los Angeles City Attorney's Office and the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office. A [recent news release](#) from the ACTF described an increasing number of cases where members of the public are providing video evidence of animal cruelty. A common factor compelling the public to step forward, the department said, is a deep concern for public safety and "the realization that anyone who would commit such horrific acts of violence on defenseless animals could also do the same to humans."

The news release described a case on Jan. 3, 2014 where members of the public captured images of a man dragging a puppy repeatedly down a street, leaving a trail of blood. Police charged Dossey James, 28, who has a previous allegation of animal abuse against him, with two counts of felony animal cruelty and set bail at \$145,000.

National Coalition Launches Website

The National Coalition on Violence Against Animals (see *LINK-Letter* February 2014) has launched a [website](#) featuring facts, news, events, and lists of organizations working together on the Link between animal abuse and human violence.



Link Prompts Japanese Police to Launch Animal Abuse Hotline

Increasing awareness that animal abuse may be linked to violent crimes has prompted the Hyogo Prefectural Police in Japan to initiate a telephone hotline where members of the public can report suspected cases of animal cruelty. Hyogo is a region in western Japan whose capital is Kobe. Japanese Link advocate Sakiko Yamazaki tells *The LINK-Letter* that the hotline received 51 calls in January, 2014, its first month of operation. The hotline is run by the Consumer and Economic Crime Division of Hyogo Police as part of the September, 2013 revision of the national Law of Animal Welfare and Management. The [Mainichi Weekly](#)



reports that the new law doubled penalty fines for cruelty convictions and specifies that owners have a "lifetime responsibility" of caring for their animals throughout the duration of their pets' lives. The definition of animal abuse was also expanded to include keeping household pets in unsanitary conditions and allowing illnesses and injuries to go untreated.

ANIMAL ABUSE AND CHILD PROTECTION

Social Work School Faculties Discussing The Link

Many human service caseworkers, including child abuse professionals, have typically not had training in how The Link might affect children under their watch. Schools of social work traditionally do not include curricula on the significance of companion animals in people's lives. Individuals seeking to write their dissertations on Link issues have faced considerable resistance from faculty review committees who do not believe that "animal" issues are part of social work practice. The National Link Coalition has identified only 11 schools of social work (out of 550) that address animal issues as relevant to the training of future social workers.



The [Animals and Society Institute](#) is addressing this shortfall through a new initiative to attempt to increase the number of social work

departments that incorporate the full continuum of human-animal relationships in their programs. These include human-animal interactions, prevention of harm to animals, early intervention for at-risk populations, and treatment of individuals who have committed or witnessed animal abuse.

An initial conference call on February 5 with faculty from five social work departments, plus e-mail exchanges with seven more individuals who were not able to participate, has started a discussion, reports Lisa Lunghofer, Rapid Response Program Director for ASI. The group is brainstorming ideas to expand animal-related courses and programs.

SCHOOLS OF SOCIAL WORK ADDRESSING HUMAN-ANIMAL INTERACTIONS

The National Link Coalition believes the following social work programs incorporate human-animal relationships in the curricula. If you know of any additions or corrections to this list, please contact Phil Arkow, National Link Coalition Coordinator at arkowpets@snip.net with details.

Arizona

Arizona State University

Colorado

Colorado State University

University of Denver

Florida

University of South Florida (Tampa)

Massachusetts

Simmons College

Michigan

Michigan State University

Tennessee

University of Tennessee

Texas

University of Texas/Pan-American

Nova Scotia

Dalhousie University

Ontario

Wilfrid Laurier University

York University

KC-CAN to Address Child Abuse Roundtable

[KC-CAN \(Caring for All Network\)](#), our Link coalition in the metropolitan Kansas City area, has been invited to make a presentation on April 11 to the [Child Abuse Roundtable](#), a group founded in 2002. More than 30 advocates and elected officials meet periodically to promote awareness of child abuse and the prevention, training and treatment services available in the region. More than 40 local participants plus state government and elected officials from Jefferson City are expected to attend. KC-CAN speakers hope to raise awareness of the importance of including relationships with animals in the assessment of children who come into contact with the child welfare system.

PREVENTING
CHILD ABUSE & NEGLECT
IN KANSAS CITY



Dog Bite Risks to Children Quantified

An issue often overlooked in discussions of how child welfare professionals recognize animal issues that threaten children's safety is the potential for animals to inflict traumatic physical injury. The National Link Coalition believes that animal abuse and dangerous pets constitute Adverse Childhood Experiences and that caseworkers should routinely screen for the presence of dangerous animals in the home and include this information in their reports.

A [recent study](#) has quantified the risk of children being bitten by dogs. Using records from 38,971 animal bites that required visits to North Carolina ERs from 2008-2010, Sarah Rhea and colleagues at the University of North Carolina and the North Carolina Division of Public Health determined that a child under 10 years of age in that state has a 1-in-50 risk of dog bite injury requiring an ER visit. Incidence rates were highest for children under 14 years of age. In addition to physiologic trauma and potential mental health trauma, rabies postexposure prophylaxis was administered during 4.3% of all ER visits.

-- Rhea, S.K., Weber, D.J., Poole, C., et al. (2014). Use of statewide emergency department surveillance data to assess incidence of animal bite injuries among humans in North Carolina. *Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association*, 244(5), 597-603.

PUBLIC AWARENESS ABOUT THE LINK

The Link – “Le Lien” – Comes to France

The Link and the National Link Coalition were featured in a [radio broadcast](#) in France last November 25 in a lengthy segment on the radio program and podcast “La bonne nouvelle” (“Good News”). On the International Violence Against Women’s Day, radio host Yolaine de la Bigne spent almost two minutes discussing “le lien entre la maltraitance animale et la violence envers les humains.” She presented findings from research in the U.S., Sweden, Japan and New Zealand and noted that France lags behind these nations in addressing animal abuse’s links to human violence.



Yolaine de la Bigne

Link Awareness Grows in Wisconsin



Phil Arkow

Wisconsin Voters for Companion Animals posted an extensive interview with Phil Arkow, National Link Coalition coordinator, in a [blog on February 12](#) called “Think About the LINK.” The interview, a series of questions and answers, traces the progress being made as a result of Link awareness and areas where more work needs to be done. The blog is a monthly bulletin about humane legislation and conditions affecting companion animals in Wisconsin.

Proposed Ohio Pet Protection Order Bill Gets Media Coverage

Ohio’s ongoing efforts to enact a law allowing courts to include pets in domestic violence protection orders (SB 177) got a boost on Feb. 26 when WKRC-TV in Cincinnati aired a [four-minute news segment](#) about the challenges domestic



violence survivors and their pets face. The feature included an interview with the National Link Coalition’s Barbara Boat, a woman whose daughter and unborn granddaughter were beaten to death by her husband and whose cats were also beaten, and a spokeswoman from the YWCA who related horrendous stories of animals being beaten, starved and tortured in domestic violence scenarios.

NEWS FROM LOCAL LINK COALITIONS

Domestic Violence/Animal Welfare Groups Partner for Strategic Communications

[Animal Protection of New Mexico](#) and the [New Mexico Coalition Against Domestic Violence](#)

are partnering on a unique two-day workshop on strategic communications and The Link, March 20-21 in Albuquerque. The workshop, entitled “[Message Matters: How to Talk About Violence and Abuse so People Listen](#),” will bring nationally renowned communications experts to help train domestic violence and animal welfare professionals on developing better messaging and creating real change in the community.



March 20 & 21, 2014 Embassy Suites Albuquerque, New Mexico

THE LINK IN THE LITERATURE

Sheriffs' Magazine Addresses The Link

It isn't often that a law enforcement publication dedicates the better part of an entire issue to the Link between animal abuse and interpersonal crimes, but the National Sheriffs Association did just that with a pioneering issue of its 68-page quarterly magazine, *Deputy and Court Officer*. The magazine, targeted specifically to deputies, addresses topics relevant to criminal justice, public safety, and the men and women on the streets and in the courthouses who are helping communities to be safer places.



Vol. 5, No. 3 of the magazine, published in 2013, includes 13 articles addressing The Link, the use of therapy dogs in courtroom testimony, enforcement of animal cruelty laws, cockfighting, puppy mill and ranch raids, and animal rescue stories. Key Link articles are listed below: an online version of the magazine is available at the [National Sheriffs Association website](#).

- Bernstein, M. (2013). Cleaning up after hoarders. *Deputy and Court Officer*, 5(3), 20-23.
- Blaney, N. (2013). Animal CSI. *Deputy and Court Officer*, 5(3), 24-25.
- Blaney, N., & Randour, M.L. (2013). National Sheriffs Association calls on FBI to improve animal cruelty laws. *Deputy and Court Officer*, 5(3), 8-9.
- National Sheriffs Association (2013). NSA's deputy executive director John Thompson supports reporting of animal cruelty crime statistics. *Deputy and Court Officer*, 5(3), 13-15.
- Ramsey, S. (2013). Enforcing your state animal cruelty laws. *Deputy and Court Officer*, 5(3), 31-35.
- Randour, M.L. (2013). Juvenile crime and animal cruelty: Understanding the link as a tool to early, more effective interventions. *Deputy and Court Officer*, 5(3), 10-12.
- Thompson, D.N. (2013). The link between animal abuse and other violent behavior. *Deputy and Court Officer*, 5(3), 4-6.

Animal Hoarding Examined in Australia

Recognizing that animal hoarding “not only presents significant welfare issues for the animals involved, but also for the hoarders and people in the surrounding community,” the authors conducted what may be the first study of animal hoarders in Australia. They found that while per capita prevalence, demographics and living conditions of animal hoarders in the state of Victoria are comparable to those in the U.S., Australian animals were in better condition and more affected by negative behavioral issues, resulting in 45% of the animals being euthanized. Agencies involved in the study called for greater involvement of human mental health services to fully address the root of the problem, to better identify groups at risk, and to develop more effective prevention and intervention protocols.

- Ockenden, E.M., De Groef, B., & Marston, L. (2014). Animal hoarding in Victoria, Australia: An exploratory study. *Anthrozoös*, 27(1), 33-47.

Study Reports on Nature of Domestic Violence “Safe Havens”

Attempting to identify the types of programs and services offered by domestic violence shelters for the pets of survivors, the Animal Welfare Institute surveyed 150 shelters. Results indicated: 63% inquired about pets on crisis hotlines; 71% inquired about pets during intake; and a variety of housing options are used. The authors caution that participants were not randomly selected; the response rate was low and represents only 11% of such programs; and that generalizations and extrapolations to the larger network of shelters should be made cautiously.

-- Randour, M.L., & Kogan, L. (2014). What do we know about safe havens for pets programs: Results of a short survey. *Lex Canis*,(13), 4-6.

THE LINK IN THE LEGISLATURES

Bills We're Watching:

Animal Abuse in the Presence of a Child



Illinois HB 3768 would make it a Class 4 felony, with subsequent violations classified as Class 3 felonies, to commit aggravated animal cruelty or abuse in the presence of a minor.



Massachusetts SB 1914, the PAWS Act (Protecting Animal Welfare and Safety), would define animal abuse committed in the presence of a child as “extreme atrocity and cruelty” with enhanced penalties. It would mandate veterinarians to report suspected animal cruelty with immunity from civil and criminal liability for good-faith reporting. The bill would create a statewide animal abuse hotline and registry of animal abuse offenders. The bill was referred to the Joint Committee on the Judiciary on Nov. 6.



New York A-706 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. The bill is in the Codes Committee.

Animal Abuse Committed by a Child



Ohio HB 243 would require a child who is adjudicated a delinquent child for committing cruelty to a companion animal to undergo a psychological evaluation and, if recommended, counseling. The bill would also require courts to sentence adult offenders to probation. The bill is in the House Judiciary Committee.




South Carolina SB 846 would require a child under age 12 who is convicted of animal mistreatment to undergo psychiatric or psychological counseling. The bill is in the Senate Judiciary Committee.


Therapeutic Interventions for Child Abuse Victims




New Jersey A-2155 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.


Animal Hoarding


 **New York AB 1466** would create a new crime of Companion Animal Hoarding, based upon recognition that living conditions in these homes frequently fall well below accepted standards for animals and human beings, and that such cases are frequently accompanied by self-neglect and neglect of children and the elderly living in the household. The bill is in the Agriculture Committee.


 **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 House Judiciary Committee.


Domestic Violence/Pet Protection Orders


 **Indiana SB 251** would make it a Level 6 felony to commit “domestic violence animal cruelty” – the mutilation or killing of an animal with the intent to threaten, intimidate, coerce, harass, or terrorize a family member. The bill passed the Senate on Feb. 4 and is in the House Courts & Criminal Code Committee.


 **Iowa SF 2118** and a companion measure, **HF 286**, would allow judges to include pets and companion animals (but not commercial livestock) in domestic violence protection-from-abuse orders. The bills have cleared the Judiciary Committee and are awaiting a vote by the full Senate.

 **New Hampshire HB 1410** would include household and domesticated animals under the domestic violence protection statutes by adding animal cruelty to the list of conducts that constitute a credible threat to the petitioner’s safety or which reflect an ongoing pattern of behavior which causes the petitioner to fear for her or his safety or well being. Courts could grant petitioners exclusive care, custody or control of any animal and order defendants to stay away from any animal. The bill is in the Criminal Justice and Safety Committee.


 **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. The bills have been referred to the House Judiciary and Senate Criminal Justice Committees.


 **Michigan SB 285** would make it illegal to kill, torture, maim, disfigure, or poison an animal with the intent to cause mental suffering or distress to another person or to exert control over another person. The bill passed the Senate and the House Committee on Criminal Justice and is awaiting action by the full House.


 **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.


 **Vermont HB 342** would hold a person who intentionally kills a pet liable to the pet’s owner for non-economic damages for emotional distress resulting from loss of love, companionship and affection of the pet.


Reporting and Cross-Reporting


 **Connecticut HB 5037** would clarify the state's landmark cross-reporting law (see *LINK-Letter July 2011*) between animal control officers and child abuse caseworkers. The amendments would require reports to be written and require an annual reporting to the General Assembly of the number of such reports filed.


 **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. The bill was enacted by the D.C. Council on Feb. 5, but must still be approved by the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives to take effect.

 **Massachusetts SB 767** would allow any person to file a nuisance suit against another person or entity that subjects an animal to conduct which poses a risk to its life, health or safety.


 **Nebraska LB 204** would permit (not mandate) any person who reasonably suspects that an animal has been abandoned, cruelly neglected or cruelly mistreated to report the incident to the investigative agency in that jurisdiction, with immunity from liability except for false statements of fact made with malicious intent. The current law allows such reports only for employees for child or adult protective services and animal control and welfare agencies.


 **New York A-3766** 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 A-3283** would require any employee of a veterinary hospital or clinic, boarding kennel, shelter or rescue center, or facility that provides services for animals to report an animal's injury, illness, or condition to the police if animal cruelty or abuse is suspected. Employees who reasonably and in good faith file such reports would be immune from civil or criminal liability. The bill is in the Agriculture Committee.

 **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.

Animal Abuse and Other Crimes

 **Arizona HB 2215** and **SB 1036** would add animal fighting and cockfighting to the list of offenses defined as "Racketeering."

 **Georgia HB 724** would make it a "misdemeanor of a high and aggravated nature" to be a spectator at a cock fight.

 **Illinois HB 3284** would declare any building used in animal fighting a public nuisance and would allow authorities to abate such building and seize any vehicle, vessel or aircraft used in such fights. The bill is in the Rules Committee.



Indiana SB 6 would make attending an animal fight a Level 6 felony rather than a Class A misdemeanor.



Massachusetts HB 1594 would replace the archaic definition of bestiality as “the abominable and detestable crime against nature, either with mankind or with a beast,” with more contemporary terminology making it illegal to “commit a sexual act upon an animal, use an object to sexually abuse an animal, or knowingly permit a sexual act with an animal.”



Michigan HB 5063 and **SB 605** would require prosecutors handling animal abuse offenses to report the individuals to the state police for entry into the department’s criminal history database (ICHAT – Internet Criminal History Access Tool). Companion bills **HB 5062** and **SB 603** would waive the normal fees when animal control or animal protection shelters request criminal background checks from the state police’s ICHAT files.



New Jersey SB 736 would create a new crime of “leader of a dog fighting network” which would be added to the list of offenses considered “racketeering activities” under New Jersey’s anti-racketeering (RICO) law. The bill is in the Senate Judiciary Committee.



New York AB 893 and **AB 1659** would recodify the state animal cruelty laws and move them from the Agriculture and Markets laws into the Penal Code. The bill is in the Codes Committee.



New York AB 4517 and **SB 2560** and **SB 5112** would classify physical injury or death occurring to animals during the commission of a felony or the immediate flight therefrom as Aggravated Cruelty.



Rhode Island HB 7099 would allow judges to impose more severe sentences than those specified in animal cruelty statutes when “substantial and compelling” circumstances exist, including the character and background of the offender and the extreme nature and circumstances of the offense. The bill is in the House Judiciary Committee.



South Dakota SB 46 would make some forms of animal cruelty a felony and expand illegal dog fighting crimes to include any animal fights. The bill passed the Senate by a vote of 33-0 on Feb. 13 and has been referred to the House Judiciary Committee. South Dakota is the only state currently lacking felony animal cruelty provisions.



Tennessee SB 1499 would make it a Class E felony or Class A misdemeanor to use a fighting dog, guard dog or vicious dog in the commission of a crime or to guard illegal activities or property. The bill is in the Senate Judiciary Committee.



Utah SB 112 would make cockfighting illegal, allow peace officers to raid cock fights and seize animals and equipment and arrest all persons present without a warrant.



Wisconsin AB 223 would prohibit offenders convicted of serious felony crimes from possessing, controlling or residing with a vicious dog for a period of 10 years. The bill is in the Rules Committee.

THE LINK IN THE NEWS

Teen Charged with Raping and Murdering His Math Teacher Said to Have Tortured Cats

Massachusetts and Tennessee investigators are [looking into reports](#) that a 15-year-old student who allegedly raped and murdered his high school math teacher previously got thrills from setting a pet cat on fire. Philip Chism has been charged with slashing the throat of Colleen Ritzer, 24, with a box cutter in a bathroom at a Danvers, Mass. high school last October 22. Police say he raped her twice including once with a tree branch, stole her credit cards, cellphone and driver's license, wheeled her body out of the school in a recycling bin and dumped her corpse in a sexually positioned manner in woods behind the athletic fields. Chism had recently moved to Danvers from Clarksville, Tenn.



Philip Chism



Pastor Charged with Teen Sex and Animal Cruelty

A pastor at the Contra Costa, Calif. Korean Presbyterian Church was charged with unlawful sexual intercourse, child concealment and animal cruelty after authorities found two runaway girls at his church and home and evidence of severe animal cruelty that led to the death of a small dog. Hyo Bin Im, 33, of San Ramon, also known as Pastor John Hyobin and Pastor John Im, was said to have had a romantic relationship with one of the girls, aged 17. Detectives told the [San Jose Mercury News](#)

Pastor Hyo Bin Im that there may be other victims. Im was described as the founder of the Living Well Ministries, a nonprofit assisting orphans, widows and the homeless.

Child Endangerment, Cruelty Charges Filed in Pup Torturing Case

A Redwood City, Calif. man has been charged with felony animal cruelty and child endangerment in the torture and death of a puppy named "Lucky," much of which reportedly took place in front of his 4-year-old daughter. San Mateo County prosecutors told the [San Francisco Examiner](#) that Alan Velete, 31, routinely tortured the pup for a month by punching and kicking it, spraying household cleaner in its eyes, and feeding it his own psychiatric prescription medication, before suffocating it on Jan. 6. Velete, on probation for 2011 assault with a deadly weapons charges, had moved into his mother's house with his girlfriend and daughter in apparent violation of a restraining order his mother filed following the 2011 charges. The girlfriend and mother said they had been too terrified to call the police, but finally did after the puppy was killed.



Alan Velete



Protesters rallied seeking justice

Protesters, Prosecutors Concerned with Link Case

A woman alleged to have reveled in the pain she reportedly inflicted while torturing her boyfriend's dog not only drew cruelty charges but local protesters, national attention, and an emphasis on The Link by local prosecutors. Sean Janas, 21, who reportedly kept a diary of her merciless beatings and force-feedings of Drano to a Labrador-shepherd mix named "Mary," is scheduled for trial on March 17. Portage County D.A. Louis Molepske told the [Wisconsin Rapids Tribune](#) that animal abuse, especially in younger people, can lead to abuse of people in later life. "That's why we take these cases seriously. We want to make sure these people are stopped before they attack a human being," he said.

LINK TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

Mar. 12 – (online): Phil Arkow will conduct 3 webinars for U.S. Army victim advocates in the U.S., Korea and Germany for the National Organization for Victim Assistance’s [National Victim Assistance Academy](#).

Mar. 13 – (online): Lesley Ashworth and Allie Phillips will conduct a Link webinar for Jewish Women International’s [National Alliance to End Domestic Abuse](#).

Mar. 20 – (online): Jennifer Rallo, Asst. State’s Atty. in Baltimore, will discuss “Investigating and Prosecuting Juvenile Animal Abusers,” 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.

Mar. 20 – (online): Phil Arkow will discuss The Link in a [webcast radio program](#), “Mind, Body, Spirit: Modern Medicine”, airing from 4:00 – 4:30 pm ET on WTER.

Mar. 20-21 – Albuquerque, N.M.: Animal Protection of New Mexico and the New Mexico Coalition Against Domestic Violence are partnering on a two-day workshop on strategic communications and The Link, “[Message Matters](#): How to Talk About Violence and Abuse so People Listen.”

Mar. 22 – 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.

Mar. 27 – Huntsville, Ala.: Allie Phillips will train on “When the Abuse of Animals Harms Children” and “Therapy Animals Helping Maltreated Children” at the [30th Annual Child Abuse Symposium](#).

April 1 – Millersville, Penna.: Phil Arkow will speak on the Link between domestic violence and animal abuse at the Millersville University [Psychology Club](#) and at a panel discussion.

April 3 – Grand Rapids, Mich.: Allie Phillips will lead workshops at the National Center for Prosecution of Child Abuse’s [Equal Justice for Children conference](#) with the Prosecuting Attorneys Assn. of Michigan.

April 5 – Gainesville, Fla.: 10 speakers will address “Animal CSI” at the 2014 [Maddie’s Veterinary Forensics Conference](#) with training on recognizing non-accidental injuries.

April 7 – Richmond, Va.: [Allie Phillips](#) will present a workshop on “When the Abuse of Animals Harms Children” at the Prevent Child Abuse Virginia conference.

April 8 – Tampa, Fla.: Phil Arkow will present on “Species-Spanning Violence Prevention” to the Annual Meeting of the [American Association of Geographers](#).

April 10 & 24 – Columbus, Ohio: Lesley Ashworth and Barbara Boat will train on the Link for probation officers, prosecutors and domestic violence advocates for the [Animals and Society Institute](#).

April 10 – Boise, Idaho: Allie Phillips will present at a joint conference of the [Idaho State Bar](#) Animal Law and Family Law sections on “Identifying and Addressing the Link between Animal Abuse and Family Violence: Creating Safer Homes for Children and Families.”

April 11 – Kansas City, Mo.: The [KC-CAN Link coalition](#) will address the Child Abuse Roundtable to raise awareness of the importance of including relationships with animals in the assessment of children who come into contact with the child welfare system.

April 17 – (online): Chris Risley-Curtiss will discuss “Intervening with Children Who Are Abusing Animals,” in a [webinar series](#) presented by the National District Attorneys Association’s National Center for Prosecution of Animal Abuse, in partnership with the ASPCA and the Animal Legal Defense Fund.

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

April 24 – Columbus, Ohio: Lesley Ashworth and Barbara Boat will conduct Link training for animal control, code enforcement and elder services field workers for the [Animals and Society Institute](#).

April 25 – Stratford, Ontario, Canada: Phil Arkow will present on Domestic Violence and The Link for [Optimism Place Women’s Shelter](#).

May 1 – Columbus, Ohio: [Lesley Ashworth](#) will present on the Link at the OSU 14th Annual Domestic Violence Symposium for Project S.A.F.E.

May 2 – New Orleans, La.: Phil Arkow will present on the Link at the [19th National Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect](#).

May 19 – Lawrenceville, N.J.: Phil Arkow will train staff and parents of [New Jersey Child Assault Prevention](#) on The Link between animal abuse and child maltreatment.

May 20-21 – South Bend, Ind.: Phil Arkow will train the [St. Joseph County Prosecutors Office](#) on The Link between Violence to People and Violence to Animals.

July 19 – Kobe, Japan: Phil Arkow will present on “The Cycle of Violence: The Connection between Violence to Humans and Animals” at the [3rd International Conference on Animal Care](#).

Aug. 28-29 – Williamsburg, Va.: Phil Arkow and Allie Phillips will discuss “Women’s Best Friend” and “Animal Therapy for Sexual Assault Victims” at the 6th Annual [Historic Triangle Conference on Crimes Against Women](#).

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

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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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