



NATIONAL LINK COALITION

Working together to stop violence against people and animals

The LINK-Letter Vol. 8, No. 5 May, 2015

A monthly report of news from THE NATIONAL RESOURCE CENTER



ON THE LINK BETWEEN ANIMAL ABUSE AND HUMAN VIOLENCE



www.nationallinkcoalition.org

[Phil Arkow](#), Coordinator and Editor

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May is Older Americans Month

Coming soon: June 15 is World Elder Abuse Awareness Day

ANIMAL ABUSE AND... DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

New Mexico Approves State Funding for Pet Safe Havens



New Mexico Governor Susana Martinez signed **S 178** in April in a pioneering program that will appropriate \$300,000 to provide temporary safe havens for the animals of domestic violence survivors. The recurring funding – \$50,000 per year over six years – will become part of the budget of the Children Youth & Families

Department. Funds will be disbursed for service provision to the New Mexico Coalition Against Domestic Violence and Animal

Protection of New Mexico's Companion Animal Rescue Effort (CARE) program. The program is believed to be the first in the nation to provide state funding for pet "safe haven" programs.



Michigan Introduces Pet Protection Order Legislation

Michigan has become the latest state to introduce a bill that would protect animals from harm or threats of harm by jealous and angry partners in domestic violence situations. **HB 4478** would allow courts to issue protection-from-abuse orders preventing respondents from injuring, torturing, neglecting, threatening, or removing the petitioner's animals. The law would apply to current or former spouses, individuals with whom the petitioner has a child in common or with whom there has been a dating relationship, or individuals presently or formerly residing in the same household.



The bill was introduced on April 21 with 11 co-sponsors and has been referred to the Committee on Criminal Justice. Michigan last addressed this issue with a bill that was defeated in 2008.

A similar bill in the Michigan Senate has potential implications for intimate partner violence as well. **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.



Robbyn Bowman gives compelling testimony at the public hearing

Wisconsin PPO Bill Advances

Wisconsin's bill that would allow courts to include animals in domestic violence protection-from-abuse orders came up for a critical vote in the state Senate Committee on Judiciary and Public Safety on April 28 – and passed unanimously by a vote of 5-0. A team of dedicated supporters testifying in Madison presented heartfelt victims' stories and convincing statistics as to why Wisconsin should become the 29th state to protect the pets of domestic violence survivors.

Those who testified in support of **SB 97** included Megan Senatori of Sheltering Animals of Abuse Victims (SAAV); Shannon Barry of Domestic Abuse Intervention Services; Wisconsin State Rep. Terese Berceau (a sponsor of companion bill **AB 141**); Tony Gibart of End Domestic Abuse Wisconsin; Jeni Haddad of the Family Support Center in Chippewa Falls; Crystal Hester at NASW-Wisconsin; Anne Reed of the Wisconsin Humane Society; and domestic violence survivor and advocate Robbyn Bowman.

Bowman's testimony was especially compelling as she shared her story about the death of her beloved dog Lambeau at the hands of her now ex-husband. No one at the hearing spoke in opposition.

Non-testifying supporters of the measure include State Rep. Andre Jacque (who introduced companion bill AB 141), Wisconsin Voters for Companion Animals, the Wisconsin Coalition Against Sexual Assault, and the Wisconsin Veterinary Medical Assn.

In a released statement, Sen. Tim Carpenter said: "I'm grateful that so many people took the time to come testify about the need for this bill, and how it will help victims of abuse and their pets. The personal stories that victims shared with the committee were compelling and point to the need for giving a judge explicit authority in these matters. I was genuinely moved that one victim drove over 5 hours from Northern Wisconsin to be able to testify."

The bill then went before the full Senate where it was passed on May 6 by a voice vote. The bill now moves to the Assembly. [Wisconsin Voters for Companion Animals](#) is optimistic that the measure will eventually be enacted.

Maryland DV Leaders Establishing Pet Protocols



The Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence (MNADV) is organizing an Animal Working Group to develop a Maryland-specific protocol for domestic violence service providers. Citing statistics regarding the great number of domestic violence survivors who report they were unable to escape or whose pets were injured or killed, MNADV is seeking a core group of dedicated service providers to develop a statewide protocol addressing care for the animal victims of domestic violence.

Joining the Animal Working Group would involve monthly one-hour meetings or conference calls, review of materials, and development of language for the protocol. Project Manager Amber Guthrie says the benefits of participation will include recognition of your organization and "being part of a progressive, statewide movement to ensure accessibility for survivors who need to use service animals."

Persons interested in participating in the Animal Working Group are invited to [contact Amber Guthrie](#).

Domestic Violence/Animal Abuse Links Explored in Puerto Rico

Relatively few research studies have explored the domestic violence/animal abuse link in a Latino context. One recent project was conducted as a [master's thesis](#) in Latin & Caribbean Studies at Indiana University in 2013 by [Nancy Vázquez-Soto](#). She presented extensive case studies and an overview of domestic violence and of attitudes toward women and animals in Puerto Rico and how a disregard for animal welfare can endanger women who are trying to escape abusive situations.

“The Connection Between Domestic Violence and Animal Cruelty in Puerto Rico: An Anthropological Study” included a survey of women in Puerto Rican domestic violence shelters. 77% of respondents reported they currently had pets; 80% had had pets as children. 28.5% said their partners had hurt or threatened their animals.

The study also interviewed counselors in women's shelters. 35% reported they had heard of the domestic violence/animal abuse link previously. 51% of counselors said that women's talking about their animals provided them with useful insights. None of the shelters included questions about animals on intake forms.

The author recommended new protocols for Puerto Rico's shelters to make allowances for or find safe housing for companion animals; better enforcement of animal protection laws; better data collection; increased community education and training for police on the link; and additional studies on the child abuse/animal abuse link.

Wales Defines Animal Abuse as Aspect of Domestic Violence

The National Assembly for Wales in the United Kingdom has passed the Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Bill. The measure, strongly supported by the RSPCA Cymru working closely with the Welsh Government and Assembly Members during its legislative journey, sought acknowledgement and action for issues related to pets in abusive situations.



Claire Lawson of the RSPCA tells the LINK-Letter that the Welsh government subsequently included a specific reference to pets in documentation linked to the bill. This provision extends the definition of abuse: violence perpetrated against victim's pets could potentially constitute abuse against the victim herself.

The bill achieved Royal Assent and became an Act on April 29. “It will be unique in the UK, not least of all because of the recognition within the guidance regarding the part pets play,” says Lawson.

In the United States, seven states include acts of violence against animals that are intended to intimidate or control an intimate partner within the definition of domestic violence: Arizona, Colorado, Indiana, Maine, Nebraska, Nevada, and Tennessee.

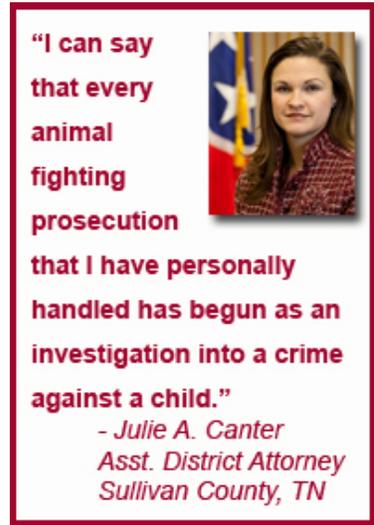
ANIMAL ABUSE AND... CHILD MALTREATMENT

Child Abuse Risk Cited in Animal Abuse Legislation

Citing the likelihood that children's welfare will be compromised by animal abuse and animal fighting, the Tennessee General Assembly has enacted two measures that will establish what is believed to be the nation's first statewide animal abuser registry and increase penalties for bringing a child to an animal fight.

SB 1204 overwhelmingly passed the Senate and was signed by Gov. Bill Haslam on May 8. The measure will create a statewide registry of animal abuse offenders, much like existing sex offender registries.

"I can say that every animal fighting prosecution that I have personally handled has begun as an investigation into a crime against a child," Sullivan County Assistant District Attorney Julie Canter told [News Channel 11](#) in Johnson City. "We have only discovered the animal fighting allegations secondarily to either child sex abuse allegations or child pornography allegations.



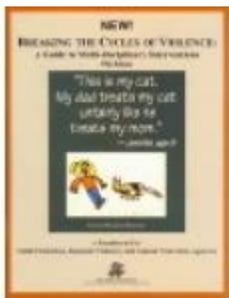
"So, the two are linked. There is a real evidentiary chain between crimes against children and crimes against animals," she said. The measure "would be helpful in assessing other crimes."

Animal abusers demonstrate "a pattern, and they carry it over to anything that is helpless," added animal shelter Director Debbie Dobbs. "They will take it out on an animal first and then they'll move forward. And a child or the elderly are the next step because they can't defend themselves."

The Tennessee Animal Abuser Registration Act, slated to take effect Jan. 1, 2016, will require the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation to post on its website for two to five years the names of anyone convicted of aggravated animal cruelty, felony animal fighting, and bestiality.

A second bill, **SB 1024**, also links animal abuse to the impact on youth. It creates a Class A misdemeanor, punishable by a fine of \$1,000 - \$2,500 per offense, to knowingly bring a child under the age of 18 to attend an animal fight. The measure also increases other penalties for animal fighting.

BUILDING AWARENESS ABOUT THE LINK



Link Training Manuals on Sale

The Latham Foundation is moving its headquarters and is having a special inventory reduction sale on its pioneering training manual, *Breaking the Cycles of Violence*. This 64-page guide, written by Phil Arkow for domestic violence, child protection and animal welfare professionals, is now available at a deep discount of only \$19.00 for a 10-pack (regularly \$85.00). The manuals can be ordered from [the Latham Foundation](#). The price is limited to inventory on hand. Individual copies of the [manual and its accompanying training video](#) are still available for \$29.75.

Visual Representations of The Link

The concepts behind The Link are intuitively simple, but trying to put them into words can be devilishly difficult. In addition to our standard Venn diagram showing how the four types of family violence are intertwined, we have also come up with some other ways to help visualize The Link. We are pleased to share these with you to help you better present this topic to your colleagues.

The domestic violence world is familiar with the Duluth Model depicting the power and control mechanisms of intimate partner violence. Here's a way to represent that in the context of animal abuse as a coercion and controlling device.

The graphic is available for your use at <http://nationallinkcoalition.org/faqs/what-is-the-link>. Just give attribution to the National Link Coalition.

The "Power and Control Wheel" of Animal Abuse and Domestic Violence

Isolation: Refusing to allow her to take her pet to her vet. Prohibiting her from socializing her dog with other dogs.

Threats: To harm or kill her pet if she leaves or asserts any independence.

Legal Abuse: Custody battles over pets. Filing theft charges if she leaves with the pet.

Denying & Blaming: Blaming her or the pet for his cruelty. Killing the pet and saying it didn't matter because the pet was old.

Emotional Abuse: Disappearing, giving away or killing pets to take away her source of unconditional love. Forced participation in animal sexual abuse.

Economic Abuse: Refusing to allow her to spend money on pet food or vet care.

Intimidation: Harming or killing pet: "Next time it'll be you..." Targeting pets of family/friends who aid her escape.

Using Children: Harming/killing children's pets to intimidate them. Blaming the "disappearance" of the family pet on her to create a wedge between her and the children.



Orlando "Paws for Peace" Walk Raises Funds, Fun and Awareness



Harbor House of Central Florida, Orlando's primary domestic violence resource center, held its fifth annual [Paws for Peace Walk](#) on Saturday, April 25. The fun and leisurely stroll for pets and their people raises awareness about domestic violence and its adverse effects on pets and their owners. Harbor House has the only on-site kennel in central Florida for the pets of

domestic abuse survivors, removing a key barrier to survivors seeking help and safety and ensures that no family member is left behind in an abusive home. Since the kennel opened 28 months ago, 111 pets have been sheltered, including 82 dogs, 24 cats, 3 guinea pigs, 1 bird and 1 turtle. The event featured a Blessing of the Pets and a raffle.

Connecticut Teens Spread Link Message in Supermarkets

The Center for Youth Leadership at Brien McMahon High School in Norwalk Conn., is continually conducting student projects to promote and support youth activism through grantmaking, public awareness activities, volunteerism, and social change campaigns. Programs were ratcheted up in April for Child Abuse Awareness Month. One such activity was part of the Center's "Shop Drop" campaign. Several members, such as Leticia Sanchez (*right*) flooded local supermarkets to post information about the Link between animal abuse and violence against people in pet food aisles. Let's hear it for Youth Power!



ANIMAL ABUSE and... VETERINARY MEDICINE

AVMA Endorses Federal Pet Protection Order Measure

The [American Veterinary Medical Association](#) is lending its support to unique bipartisan legislation that would expand federal protections to the pets of victims of domestic violence.

The Pet and Women Safety (PAWS) Act (H.R. 1258) would assist domestic violence survivors who have pets by making it a stalking-related crime to threaten a pet. The measure would also provide grant funding to increase the availability of alternate housing for pets of domestic violence victims, encourage states to provide coverage for pets under protection orders, and require abusers who harm pets to pay veterinary and other expenses incurred as a result.



By mid-April, the PAWS Act had 57 co-sponsors in Congress and the endorsement of numerous domestic violence and animal welfare organizations.

In announcing its support, AVMA quoted [Maya Carless](#), Executive Director of the Animals & Society Institute and a member of the National Link Coalition's Steering Committee. "The PAWS Act represents tremendous advancement in recognition that the abuse of animals in domestic violence threatens the safety and well-being of animals and people alike," said Carless, whose background with Georgia's Ahimsa House includes assisting domestic violence survivors to find housing for their animals.

"I have personally worked with hundreds of victims who escaped abusive situations with little more than the clothes on their backs and their pets in their arms. Not only were they struggling to find safety for both themselves and their pets, the abusers' control over their finances left them unable to afford necessary veterinary care for their pets who had been harmed by the abuse.

"While many kindhearted veterinarians help greatly by discounting or donating their services, the PAWS Act would provide financial restitution for the costs of veterinary care in these situations, lifting the burden from the veterinary profession and greatly increasing access to essential veterinary treatment for animal victims of domestic violence," she said.

The AVMA Steering Committee on Human-Animal Interactions, together with the AVMA Animal Welfare Committee, recommended that the Association support H.R. 1258 because it is consistent with veterinary efforts to protect the welfare of animals and promote responsible human-animal relationships, including the philosophy encompassed in the AVMA Animal Welfare Principles and its resource publication *Practical Guidance for the Effective Response by Veterinarians to Suspected Animal Cruelty, Abuse and Neglect*.

Additionally, the AVMA committees concluded the bill is consistent with information regarding co-occurrence of animal abuse and domestic violence and state legislative responses in the wake of research in this area.

"No one should have to make the choice between leaving an abusive situation and ensuring their pet's safety," Rep. Katherine Clark said. The Maryland Democrat introduced the PAWS Act on March 4 along with Republican Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen of Florida.

“Too many victims feel compelled to stay in abusive relationships to protect their pets. This bill protects both victims and pets,” Ros-Lehtinen added.

Advocates for the legislation say approximately one-third of domestic violence victims delay leaving abusive relationships out of concern for the well-being of their pets. Supporters also claim that up to 25% of victims have reported returning to an abusive partner because they fear for their pets.

Are Veterinary Colleges Teaching About Animal Abuse in States Where Such Reporting is Mandated?

In response to a question raised in the [April LINK-Letter](#) asking whether veterinarians are receiving regular training in animal abuse or child maltreatment in those states where practitioners are mandated reporters, we received a response from one veterinarian in California. “My answer is ‘No,’” said Jennifer W. “I am unaware of any required classes on the topic at either University of California – Davis’s vet school or at Western University’s vet school.

I agree that veterinarians need more education and likely, it needs to be part of the required curriculum and part of required continuing education to make a difference.”



We invite your input to this important question. Fifteen states mandate veterinarians to report suspected animal abuse, two states require that they report suspected child abuse, one state mandates they report elder abuse, and 18 states require everyone to report suspected child abuse. Please send The LINK-Letter any insights you can provide to arkowpets@snip.net.

THE LINK AND... ELDER ABUSE

Coalition Participating in World Elder Abuse Awareness Day



The National Link Coalition is partnering with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ Administration for Community Living to support [World Elder Abuse Awareness Day](#) on June 15. The annual event, sponsored by the National Center on Elder Abuse, draws attention to the abuse, neglect and financial exploitation affecting an estimated 5,000,000 older Americans.

WEAAD was started in 2006 by the International Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse and the World Health Organization at the UN to promote greater understanding of the social, cultural, economic and demographic processes leading to elder abuse and neglect. As a collaborator in WEAAD, the National Link Coalition is participating in the Elder Justice Roadmap Project.

The animal abuse/elder abuse Link is often found in animal hoarding, in which many hoarders are isolated older persons, and in cases of financial exploitation in which seniors’ pets are held hostage for ransom by other family members. Other Link issues include seniors who delay or refuse medical attention or hospitalization due to lack of foster care for their pets, and health and welfare concerns arising from seniors whose limited capabilities prevent them from adequately cleaning up after or caring for their pets.

THE LINK AND... CRIMINAL JUSTICE



Denmark, Spain Ban Bestiality

Fearing that existing laws were encouraging sex tourists to come to their country to engage in intercourse with animals, Denmark enacted legislation on April 21 that banned bestiality. Those voting for the bill said Denmark did not want to be the last northern Europe country where bestiality was legal: Germany, Norway, Sweden and Great Britain had earlier banned it, [Reuters](#) reported.

Previously, sex with animals was illegal but only if it could be demonstrated that the act harmed the animal, a standard that was difficult to prove. “We must give the animal the benefit of the doubt,” wrote Farm Minister Dan Jorgensen.

A Justice Ministry survey in 2011 reported that 17% of veterinarians had suspected that an animal they treated had had intercourse with a person. Animal welfare advocates claimed Denmark was home to organized animal sex shows, clubs and brothels.

Meanwhile, the Spanish Parliament has approved an amendment that criminalizes the “sexual exploitation of animals.” With rapid enactment and relatively little publicity, the new measure was published in the [official state bulletin of penal codes](#) on March 30. The amendments provide for penalties ranging from 91 days to one year in prison and covers domesticated animals. Penalties are enhanced for actions committed in the presence of a minor. The [Association of Parliamentarians for the Defense of Animals](#) (APPDA) was vital to the passage of the amendment.



APPDA tells The LINK-Letter that the UN’s Committee on the Rights of the Child has called on the governments of Portugal and Colombia to take measures to prevent children’s exposure to bullfights under the category of “freedom from all forms of violence.” The Committee is also reviewing Mexico’s compliance with the Convention of the Rights of the Child.

NEWS from LOCAL LINK COALITIONS

Central California Link Coalition Organizing



RedRover’s Esperanza Zúñiga (left), and the National Link Coalition’s Phil Arkow (right) were the featured speakers at an all-day workshop and facilitation on April 30 in Fresno, Calif. Twenty-three area professionals and volunteers, representing the District Attorney’s office, SPCA, animal services, CASA, law enforcement, and environmental health convened in the Clovis Fire Department’s training



center to learn more about The Link and to initiate interdisciplinary cross-communication programs. The effort is being spearheaded by the [Central California Animal Disaster Team](#).

NEWS from the NATIONAL LINK COALITION

Two Coalition Members Named Among Top 10 Animal Defenders

Two members of the National Link Coalition's Steering Committee were honored in April by the Animal Legal Defense Fund by being named two of [America's Top 10 Animal Defenders](#). Allie Phillips, J.D., and John Thompson were included in this select group as part of the celebration of National Justice for Animals Week.



Allie is the director of the National Center for Prosecution of Animal Abuse at the National District Attorneys Association. She founded the network Sheltering Animals & Families Together (SAF-T) to help families with pets flee abusive homes and find safety. She is a nationally-recognized author, attorney, and legal advocate for animal protection.



John is the deputy executive director and chief of staff for the National Sheriffs' Association. He has served as chief of police for Mount Rainier, Md., and as an animal control officer. In 2014, John led the movement to establish the National Coalition on Violence Against Animals and successfully petitioned the FBI to include animal abuse crimes in the Uniform Crime Report.

When National Link Coalition leaders comprise 20% of a national award's selections, we must be doing something right. Way to go, Allie and John!

THE LINK... in the LITERATURE

(If you're having trouble finding any of these articles, please let us know. We may be able to help you track them down.)

Intimate Partner Violence as Link and Health Issues

This article, written primarily for health professionals, aims to change the perception of intimate partner violence (IPV) from what was previously considered a private matter or law enforcement issue into a recognized individual and public health problem. The article describes the epidemiology of IPV, its costs to society, and its links to animal abuse, elder abuse, child abuse, workplace violence, school violence. It describes the medical manifestations of IPV and recommended procedures for emergency room screening for IPV. (The article is available in the National Link Coalition's [website resources](#).)

-- Goodman, P. (2006). *The relationship between intimate partner violence and other forms of family and societal violence. Emergency Medicine Clinics of North America, 24(4), 889-903.*

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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.

THE LINK... IN THE LEGISLATURES

Bills We're Watching:

Domestic Violence/Pet Protection Orders



H.R. 1258 – the Pets And Women’s Safety (PAWS) Act – was re-introduced with a new number and 48 co-sponsors (12 Republican, 36 Democrat). 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. Supporters are seeking a few more Republican co-sponsors to help keep sponsorship bipartisan.



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.



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 has been a dating relationship, or an individual presently or formerly residing in the same household. The bill has been referred to the Committee on Criminal Justice.



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. The measure will appropriate \$300,000 (\$50,000 recurring funding per year over six years) to provide temporary safe havens for the animals of domestic violence survivors. Funding will become part of the budget of the Children Youth & Families Department and disbursed for service provision to the New Mexico Coalition Against Domestic Violence and Animal Protection of New Mexico’s Companion Animal Rescue Effort (CARE) program.



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. The Senate bill has passed the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Public Safety and the full Senate and is scheduled for a hearing in the Assembly.

Therapeutic Interventions for Child Abuse Victims

 **Connecticut HB6725** would 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 has passed the House and Senate.

 **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

 **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 Agriculture 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 was scheduled for a public hearing on April 1.

 **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.

Animal Abuse and Other Crimes

 **Arizona SB 1105** would define animal fighting and cockfighting as racketeering in the state’s organized crime, fraud and terrorism statutes. The bill is in the Judiciary and Rules Committees.

 **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. **Senate Bill 219** would prohibit offenders convicted of animal fighting or bestiality from owning animals other than livestock for 5 years. The bills are in the Judiciary Committee.

 **New Jersey SB 736** and a newer version, **AB 3596** 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 bills are in the Senate Judiciary and Assembly Agriculture and Natural Resources Committees.

 **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.

 **Oregon HB 3468** and **HB 2844** would add threats to cause physical injury to an animal as a means to induce another person to commit unwanted acts to the definition of coercion, a Class C felony. The bill is in the Judiciary 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.

Interventions for Animal Abuse Offenders

 **New Jersey S2449**, “Shyanne’s Law,” would require convicted adult animal abusers to receive mental health evaluations. Currently, only juvenile offenders receive mental health screenings. The bill is in the Senate Law and Public Safety Committee.

 **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. **A1673** and **S814** would require that juvenile offenders convicted of animal cruelty undergo psychiatric evaluation and treatment where necessary. The bills are in the Agriculture Committee.

Cross Reporting

 **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** would allow 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.

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

Animal Hoarding

 **Arizona HB 2429** and **SB 1265** would make it illegal to intentionally, knowingly or recklessly hoard animals. The bills would also allow courts to require offenders to undergo psychiatric evaluation and counseling. **HB 2429** passed the House and was referred to the Senate Government and Rules Committees. **SB 1265** is in the Senate Judiciary, Natural Resources and Rules Committees.



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 would create 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, and would increase the penalties for sexual assault of an animal. The bill is in the Judiciary Committee.

THE LINK... IN THE NEWS

Woman Sentenced to Prison in Elder Abuse/Animal Cruelty Case



Deutsch watched as one of the 17 horses was led away

A Murrieta, Calif. woman who prosecutors said systematically starved 17 horses in animal abuse that the judge called “horrendous” was sentenced on April 9 to four years in prison and ordered to pay the Riverside County Department of Animal Services \$200,000 in restitution. Janice Susan Deutsch, 50, had earlier been convicted of felony elder abuse and sentenced to seven years in prison after bringing her 86-year-old mother, dehydrated, sunburned, covered in urine and feces, and with bleeding bedsores and legs in a locked position, to a hospital (See [LINK-Letter November, 2012](#)). The animal cruelty sentence is to be served after Deutsch completes her prison term in the elder abuse case, the [Riverside Press-Enterprise](#) reported. The horses were placed under Animal Services care for a year: all recovered fully and have been re-homed. Speaking at the sentencing, prosecutor Rosie Semnar said, “It’s very clear that the defendant preys on the vulnerable.”

Domestic Violence Offender Charged with Animal Cruelty



Scott Henry Reeves

An Oklahoma City man with a history of domestic violence who allegedly swung his puppy around by the throat and threw it on the ground – and then reportedly told eyewitnesses, “It’s my dog. I can do what I want.” – was arrested on April 25 on an animal cruelty complaint. Witnesses who saw the incident at a local gas station called police and took the dog into safekeeping. Scott Henry Reeves, 25, was convicted in October, 2014 of multiple crimes including domestic abuse, resisting arrest and assault and battery upon an emergency medical care provider, [NewsOK](#) reported.



Three Children Rescued During Animal Cruelty Investigation

Authorities investigating an animal cruelty case in Cameron, W. Va. had to call child protection officials to rescue three children who were “covered in muck” in a house that was described as having “atrocious conditions.” The children, ages 2, 7 and 15, were living in deplorable conditions without running water and electricity. [WTRF-TV](#) reported the children were placed in state custody. Nine dead horses and cattle in various stages of decay, and 25 living horses and cattle, including three that were extremely malnourished, had to be removed. The children’s parents, Brandon and Theresa Midcap, were charged with child neglect with serious risk. It was not clear whether animal cruelty charges were also filed.

LINK TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

May 12 – Seattle, Wash.: Barbara Boat will discuss “The Impact of Toxic Stress and Exposure to Animal Cruelty on the Developing Brain: What Every Professional Should Know” at the [Children’s Justice Conference](#).

May 13-15 – Orlando, Fla.: The [International Veterinary Forensic Sciences Association](#) will hold its 8th Annual Conference.

May 20 – (online): Phil Arkow will lead two webinars on “Interpersonal Violence and Animal Cruelty” for the [National Organization for Victim Assistance Academy](#).

June 2 – Washington D.C.: Allie Phillips will train at the [National Children's Alliance Leadership Conference](#) on “When the Abuse of Animals Harms Children: Unlocking a Child’s Story” and “Therapy Animals Supporting Children: Policy & Practice Supporting Your New Comfort Team Member.”

June 3 – Manassas, Va.: Randy Lockwood will present on The Link for the [Prince William County Police Department](#)’s physical abuse and special victims units, animal control, DSS adult and protective services, and the commonwealth attorney’s office.

June 4 – Ogden, Utah: Phil Arkow will present “Animal Abuse and Its Link to Child Abuse and Violence: A Guide for Educators” to the [Ogden-Weber Humane Education Society](#)’s annual humane education training conference for teachers.

June 5 – Toronto, Ont., Canada: Tim Battle will present on “The Pet Problem: Helping People by Helping their Animals” at the [Canadian Domestic Violence Conference](#).

June 8 – Bloomington, Ill.: Mark Kumpf will address “Workplace Violence and the Animal Profession” at the [Prairie States Animal Welfare Conference](#).

June 11-12 – Denver, Colo.: Phil Arkow will introduce The Link as a species-spanning approach to animal shelter administration at the [Society of Animal Welfare Administrators](#)’ Management Conference.

June 15 (Various Locations): [World Elder Abuse Awareness Day](#).

June 15 – Red Deer, Alta., Canada: [Tim Battle](#) and Amy Corpe will present on the Alberta Alliance for the Safety of Animals and People at the Central Alberta Social Work Conference.

June 18– (Online): Phil Arkow will discuss “Putting the LINK Puzzle All Together: Building Community Partnerships to Protect Animals and People” in a [webinar series](#) presented by the National District Attorneys Association’s National Center for Prosecution of Animal Abuse.

June 30 – Baltimore, Md.: The [National Coalition on Violence Against Animals](#) will hold a one-day conference on The Link.

July 7-9 – Saratoga Springs, N.Y.: Phil Arkow will give the keynote address on “The Link Across the Lifespan” at the Special Session on Vulnerable Populations and their Pets at the 2015 [International Society of Anthrozoology](#) conference.

July 23-24 – Orlando, Fla.: Allie Phillips will present at the [Florida Krimes Against Kids Conference](#) on “When Animal Abuse Co-occurs with Family Violence: Strategies & Policies for Keeping Families Safe” and co-present with Danielle Hughes of the Sarasota Child Protection Center on “Therapy Animals Supporting Children: Policy, Practice & Cases Supporting Your New Comfort Team Member.”

July 24 – Oklahoma City, Okla.: Paul Needham and Jeanene Lindsey will present on “Animal Abuse, Elder Abuse and Hoarding: Challenges and Strategies for Adult Protective Services” at the 25th Annual [Summer Geriatric Institute](#).

Aug. 20 – (Online): Belinda Lewis and Matt Lewis will discuss “Animal Cruelty Crime Scene Forensic Photography” in a [webinar series](#) presented by the National District Attorneys Association’s National Center for Prosecution of Animal Abuse.

Aug. 25 – Nashville, Tenn.: Paul Needham will present on “The Link between Animal Abuse and Other Forms of Family Violence” at the [American Association of Service Coordinators](#) conference.

Sept. 14 – Albuquerque, N. M.: “Positive Links” -- the New Mexico Conference on The Link between Animal Abuse and Human Violence – will hold an [all-day conference](#).

Sept. 22 – Fort Wayne, Ind.: Phil Arkow will conduct a Link training on behalf of [Fort Wayne Animal Care & Control](#).

Sept. 24 – Kitchener, Ont., Canada: Maya Gupta will speak on “Examining the Cruelty Link between Humans and Animals and Finding Solutions for Effective Intervention” at the HAV (Human-Animal Vulnerability) Coalition of Kitchener-Waterloo Region’s 2nd [Link Conference](#).

Sept. 26 – Blacksburg, Va.: Phil Arkow will discuss animal abuse as the “dark side” of the human-animal bond at the [CENTAUR](#) Human-Animal Bond Symposium.

Oct. 1 – Baltimore, Md.: Randy Lockwood and Sharon Miller will present on building community responses to animal cruelty at the [National Animal Care & Control Association](#) conference.

Oct. 15 – Charlottesville, Va.: Randy Lockwood and Sharon Miller will present on building community responses to animal cruelty at the [Virginia Animal Control Association](#) annual conference.

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. 16 – Phoenix, Md.: The Baltimore County State’s Attorney’s Office Animal Abuse Unit will hold an [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) 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
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