



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](#), Coordinator and Editor

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THE LINK AND THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

Ohio Bans Animal Sexual Abuse

After protracted debate and delays, the Ohio General Assembly in December finally made Ohio the 42nd state to prohibit people from engaging in sexual relations with animals or providing animals for others' sexual conduct. On Dec. 19, Gov. John Kasich signed into law 17 measures, including **SB 331**, an omnibus measure that included the original **SB 195**. Its provisions take effect 90 days after the signing.



Gov. John Kasich

The measure amends section 959.99 and enacts section 959.21 of the Revised Code to prohibit a person from knowingly engaging in sexual conduct with an animal and to possess, sell or purchase an animal with the intent that it be subjected to sexual conduct. Organizing, promoting, aiding and abetting sexual conduct with an animal is similarly prohibited. The crime is defined as a second-degree misdemeanor.

The new law also provides for the seizure and impoundment of an animal that is the subject of a violation, and authorizes a sentencing court to require an offender to undergo psychological evaluation or counseling. The court may also require the owner to forfeit the animal.

The omnibus measure also increased penalties for animal fighting to make attending, participating in, wagering, or bringing a minor to an animal fight as a felony punishable by a fine of up to \$10,000.

With the recent passage of laws banning bestiality in Ohio, New Jersey and New Hampshire, eight states remain in which sexual conduct with animals remains legal:

- **Hawaii:** Bestiality per se is not banned, but displaying it or promoting a child to engage in it are illegal.
- **Kentucky:** Bestiality is illegal in connection with prostitution and pornography, but is not banned in itself.
- **Nevada:** Bestiality is illegal only when sex with animals is depicted in pornography involving minors.
- **New Mexico:** Bestiality is not generally prohibited and is illegal only if it involves sexual exploitation of children.

- **Texas:** There is no general ban on bestiality. It is banned in child pornography and if someone employs, authorizes or induces a child younger than 18 to do it. Texas also prohibits the promotion of obscene material, including acts of bestiality.
- **Vermont:** Bans bestiality only in connection with sexual exploitation of children.
- **West Virginia:** Bestiality is not illegal in itself but it is illegal to film minors engaged in it and to distribute materials depicting it to minors.
- **Wyoming:** Bestiality is illegal only in conjunction with sexual exploitation of children.

Vicki Deisner, Midwest Legislative Director for the ASPCA, testified in November, 2015 about the need for the bill in Ohio (*See the [December 2015 LINK-Letter](#)*). “Bestiality is, at its core, an antisocial psychological problem, and it is a form of animal abuse regardless of the human perpetrators’ beliefs or intentions, she said. “Bestiality is more than a cultural taboo -- it is a serious offense that exploits the animals physically and psychologically, often times killing them, and is closely tied to violence and sexual abuse toward humans.”

Serial Animal Killer Prompts Warnings of Possible Human Violence

Law enforcement and humane officials in London, Ontario, are warning pet owners about the potential of a “serial animal killer” in their midst after a series of gruesome discoveries involving mutilated animals prompted at least one criminologist to suggest that the perpetrator could potentially move on to more serious crimes targeting humans.

Over the past year, at least eight incidents involving at least 17 dead dogs, rabbits, cats, geese, snakes, and coyotes – many of which were found beheaded or skinned and posed or displayed in public places around f the city. London Humane Society Executive Director Judy Foster told [CBC News](#) that the pattern of killings appears to be escalating from wildlife to companion animals.

All of the animals were found with some form of mutilation, but the absence of blood at the scenes suggests they were killed elsewhere, using a scalpel, she said. “The animals are incredibly clean,” Foster said. “We believe that it would take a fair amount of time to do that.”



Criminologist Michael Arntfield

Michael Arntfield, a criminology professor at Western University, believes one person is behind the incidents. “This will continue to escalate,” he said. “This is not a prank, it’s not mischief. It’s sexual, it’s predatory, it’s high-risk and it’s criminal.”

Arntfield, a former police officer, called the perpetrator a “serial animal killer,” and the incidents a clear case of zoosadism — being sadistic to an animal — with an underlying sexual component.

Counselors are helping humane society staff to deal with the gruesome discoveries. “The longer we talk about this, the hair on my arms is standing straighter and straighter,” Foster said. “It’s chilling. And at a certain point, when these things keep happening, we also need to be concerned about public safety — public human safety.”



Caring for the Pets of Incarcerated Offenders

In what may be the only program of its kind in the U.S., officials at the Onondaga County Correctional Facility near Syracuse, N.Y. have implemented a policy that requires booking deputies to ask all inmates if they have pets at home in need of care. Onondaga County Sheriff's Deputy Melissa Robar tells *The LINK-Letter* that she, along with Deputy Sandi Molta and former Undersheriff Warren Darby, implemented the policy over a year-and-a-half ago.

Robar notes that when new inmates arrive in booking they are asked a series of questions, including whether they have any animals in need of care. If so, they have 3 options. They can call a family member or friend to take care of their animals. Or they can fill out a form which allows the Central New York SPCA to either care for and house their pets while they are incarcerated or the inmate can sign a surrender form so their animals can be placed up for adoption. Their final option is to turn over their house keys to members of the Jail Ministry Program, who will take care of the animals either in the inmate's home or in their own residence until they are released.

"To my knowledge we are the only county jail in the country that has a policy like this," says Robar. "Our policy isn't perfect. We are working out the kinks but we are very proud of it and hope other county jails pick up on it and implement a policy similar to ours. I am very proud that in our county animals are cared for."



Sen. Angela Burks Hill

Mississippi, Kentucky Measures Would Increase Cruelty Penalties, Ban Bestiality

A proposed bill in Mississippi would make first-offense aggravated animal cruelty a felony and mandate psychological evaluations for offenders, based on the premise that such actions will not only help protect animals but possibly protect people. State Sen. Angela Burks Hill introduced a similar measure in 2016 that failed to make it out of committee, but she told [WLOX-TV](#) that she is hopeful her revised bill will pass in 2017. "We realized we do need to make aggravated animal cruelty, a first-offense felony because those folks can still go and get a job with normal people and pass a background check even though they're torturing animals," Hill said. Most cruelty cases in Mississippi are currently treated as misdemeanors. Hill said enhanced penalties would also save local law enforcement agencies time and money. As *The LINK-Letter* was going to press, the bill had not yet been assigned a number.

Meanwhile in Kentucky, State Rep. Wesley Morgan has introduced two significant bills. **HB 143** would make the sexual assault of a dog or cat a first-offense Class D felony, and a Class C felony if committed in the presence of a minor. Currently, bestiality is illegal in Kentucky only if it occurs in conjunction with prostitution. **HB 135** would redefine animal torture to include deliberate neglect or physical abuse that results in death or serious physical injury to a dog or cat. Offenders of both measures would be barred from owning dogs or cats for 5 years for a first offense, and lifetime for subsequent convictions. Animals so forfeited would be turned over to shelters.



Rep. Wesley Morgan

ANIMAL ABUSE AND... DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Scale Developed to Measure Domestic Violence Animal Abuse

Although empirical research and anecdotal evidence linking animal abuse with domestic violence have proliferated in recent years, comparing results among studies has been challenged by significantly varying operational definitions for animal abuse. As a result, the incidence of animal abuse within domestic violence contexts ranges widely. A new study seeks to mitigate this problem by creating a consistent measurement scale of animal maltreatment by intimate partners.



Amy Fitzgerald, Betty Barrett, Rochelle Stevenson and Rachael Shwom

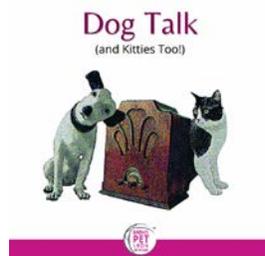
The Partner's Treatment of Animals Scale (PTAS) is comprised of five scales: emotional animal abuse, threats to harm animals, animal neglect, physical animal abuse, and severe animal abuse. Developed by researchers at the University of Windsor, Rutgers University and Hartwick College, the PTAS was developed with input from focus groups and residents at 23 domestic violence shelters geographically dispersed across Canada.

The PTAS includes 40 questions designed to measure behavioral acts of omission and commission perpetrated by partners to cause physical or emotional harm to companion animals and, by extension, to the human victims. The questionnaire includes such issues as refusal to provide food or water, hitting pets with objects or throwing objects at them, breaking a pet's bones, threats to get rid of a pet to make the victim do something, and putting pets in dangerous situations.

The researchers suggest that subsequent use of the PTAS should assess whether scores on the physical abuse scales are predictive of different types of intimate partner violence and of physical child abuse. Future research should also study how scores on the scales are related to abused women's willingness to seek help.

-- Fitzgerald, A., Barrett, B., Shwom, R., Stevenson, R., & Chernyak, E. (2016). Development of the Partner's Treatment of Animals Scale. *Anthrozoös*, 29(4), 611-625.

Pet-Friendly Shelter Gets Additional Publicity



The Urban Resource Institute's People and Animals Living Safely (URIPALS) program – the only one of New York City's 50 domestic violence shelters to accept pets (See the [April 2014 LINK-Letter](#)), received additional publicity on Dec. 3 thanks to a radio broadcast on Tracie Hotchner's program, "Dog Talk (and Kitties Too)." Nathaniel Fields, President of the Urban Resource Institute, discussed details of opening New York's first pet-friendly domestic violence shelter. URIPALS has been featured extensively in the media, including a major feature article in the New York Times. The program, number 501 in the show's eight-year history, was broadcast from the NPR Peconic Public Broadcasting station on Long Island, where it is heard across lower New York and into Connecticut and the Berkshires. Other guests on the show discussed how service animals alter the lives of the physically handicapped, and canine genetics and the origin of dogs. The program can be heard [at this link](#).

Paper Explores Contentious Pet Custody Disputes

The new law in Alaska allowing courts to award custody of animals in divorce proceedings ([See the November 2016 LINK-Letter](#)), believed to be the first legislation of its kind in the world, addresses a highly contentious issue affecting families and their pets. A recent research paper has investigated this phenomenon in Canada where courts, much as in the U.S., have been reluctant to consider animals' welfare or the emotional attachments of the feuding parties in their rulings.



Natasha Melfi

Writing in an Advanced Family Law course in Ottawa last April, student Natasha Melfi noted the often difficult and overwhelming complexities involved when relationships break down. Federal and provincial statutory provisions address child custody, but the evolving nature of human-animal relationships is just starting to make its way into case law affecting pet custody.

“Family pets hold a greater importance to their owners than most other physical possessions, and are often considered a member of the family and treated in a manner similar to children,” Melfi wrote. But Canadian jurisprudence strictly considers pets personal possessions that should be divided in the same way as other property, such as a bicycle, and not in a similar way to the custody and access of children. Melfi argued that this designation of pets is outdated and no longer relevant for modern families. “As most Canadians would agree, they care more about the well-being of their pet than that of their bicycle,” she said.

Canadian pet ownership is a \$6.5 billion industry: over half of families own at least one cat or dog, with a population of 14 million. 86% of Canadian dog owners consider their pet to be a part of the family. Ironically, Canadian men and women tend to seek divorces around the ages of 44.5 and 41.9 years respectively, the age bracket with the highest rates of pet ownership – owning 75 % of all pets. A little over a third of all marriages in Canada end in divorce.

Under Canadian family law, upon the breakdown of a marriage, spouses are entitled to a 50-50 division of the value of all their assets acquired during the marriage, known as net family property. (Common-law spouses are not afforded this same protection.) Pets may be omitted from these assets as excluded property, if, for example, they were acquired by one party as a gift or via contract.

The high costs, lengthy trial process and unsatisfying outcomes of an adversarial system are significant disincentives to bringing pet disputes to court. Melfi suggested that mediation or Alternative Dispute Resolution may offer parties in pet custody disputes more opportunity to resolve their issues amicably, with the best interests of the animal in mind.

Melfi cited several lower court decisions in Canada and the U.S. which have strayed from the restrictive cataloging in attempting to find a fairer and more just solution, not only for the parties, but also for the animals in dispute.

Ultimately, until an appellate court recognizes pets as more than strictly property, separating couples who want their pet's well-being to be considered should avoid legal intervention, she concluded. “Therefore, until family court justices can apply creative and flexible determinations, pets will never be viewed as valued members of the family, and will continue to be callously equated with bicycles.”

NEWS FROM LOCAL LINK COALITIONS

Oklahoma Coalition Hiring Part-Time Coordinator



OKLAHOMA LINK COALITION

website and Facebook page as needed.

The Oklahoma Link Coalition is seeking a part-time coordinator, to work 10-15 hours per week, for this volunteer and professional group comprised of experts working in animal welfare, human services, domestic violence, and child and elder services. The coordinator will be responsible for the management and coordination of the coalition's events, development and implementation of membership outreach, and updating the organization's

The position requires demonstrated applied skills in word processing, Microsoft Office (Word, Excel and Power Point) and the ability to update the Oklahoma Link Coalition [website](#) and social media accounts. Ability to work without direct supervision is required.

The coordinator will be considered an independent contractor to the Oklahoma Link Coalition whose payment is made by the Kirkpatrick Foundation at an hourly rate commensurate with experience. Applicants should possess a minimum of two to four years experience in nonprofit work, including experience in event coordination and project management. The job will require some travel.

Founded in 2014, the Oklahoma Link Coalition's goal is to help make Oklahoma a safer place for animals and humans by educating as many professional, public, and private entities about The Link. The group also provides a network of information and resources for professionals working within law enforcement, animal shelters, veterinarians, child welfare, adult abuse, domestic violence, universities, and others.

Candidates should submit a cover letter, resume, writing sample and contact for three professional references to: Manda Shank and Paulette Black, Kirkpatrick Foundation, 1001 West Wilshire Boulevard, Oklahoma City, OK 73116 or <mailto:manda@kirkpatrickfoundation.org> or <mailto:pblack@kirkpatrickfoundation.org>. Please, no phone calls.

South Florida Plans More Fundraising and Training



The [South Florida LINK Coalition](#), whose November raffle brought in a whopping \$1,000 in just over two hours (*See the [December 2016 LINK-Letter](#)*), is planning another major event with a 5k Walk/Run tentatively scheduled for April 29th. The event is timed to coincide with both Sexual Assault Awareness Month and Animal Cruelty Awareness Month.

The coalition is also conducting train-the-trainer sessions to get more professionals comfortable with educating others on Link topics. A two-part training video is in the works, as is a formulated concrete protocol/flow chart for first responders who encounter Link issues. At the group's December meeting, a representative from AVDA (Aid to Victims of Domestic Abuse) gave a presentation describing the organization and discussed ways to be more Link-informed.

Award-winning Pet Safekeeping Program Continues to Grow

With guidance from representatives of over a dozen animal and human welfare organizations, the Alberta SPCA's Pet Safekeeping Program, known as the Alberta Alliance for the Safety of Animals and People ([AASAP](#)), continues to expand and be recognized for its invaluable work caring for pets of domestic violence victims, allowing them to leave their abusive situations.



The advisory group includes representatives from animal health, animal welfare, human services, law enforcement, and women's shelters. AASAP coordinator [Tim Battle](#) tells *The LINK-Letter* that participating veterinary clinics are essential to the program, ensuring that the animals are healthy before moving to their foster homes.

With a goal of eventually expanding province-wide to include more rural areas, the program – which started in the Edmonton area in 2014 – now includes the Alberta communities of Whitecourt, Camrose, St. Paul, and Lloydminster. In its second year of operation the program has doubled in size; as of early December 2016, the program had helped 88 clients and their children escape violence by caring for their 118 pets.

AASAP has been recognized through two major awards in the past year. In October 2015 AASAP was acknowledged by the pet industry, receiving the [Summit Award for Collaboration](#). In November 2016 AASAP received the prestigious [Inspiration Award for Leadership in Family Violence Prevention](#), presented by the Alberta [Ministry of Human Services](#). Both awards were accepted on behalf of all partner organizations and demonstrated the strength of the partnership.

Lack of placement for pets has long been known to be a major barrier for domestic violence victims seeking safety. In the Alberta SPCA's 2012 study of women's shelters across the province, it was reported that 59% of women with pets delayed leaving abusive situations out of concern for their animals. In many cases, the abuser threatened or harmed the animal as a way of controlling the partner. "The AASAP pet safekeeping initiative is truly making a difference for both the animals and people who otherwise wouldn't have been able to escape their abuse," says Battle.

BUILDING AWARENESS ABOUT THE LINK

San Bernardino ACT Trains Animal Welfare Personnel



Phil Arkow, Amy Raines and Claudia Swing share a light-hearted moment at the San Bernardino County, California's Animal Cruelty Task Force training conference in December. The week-long training introduced Link concepts and strategies to more than 80 animal care and control professionals from across southern California. The training is conducted under a program of the San Bernardino County District Attorney's office.

The Link Comes to Colombia



Julio Aguirre, a forensic veterinarian from Medellín, Colombia, has been actively lecturing about The Link and related topics throughout his country. He presented at the World Small Animal Veterinary Association's Congress in Cartagena, among other venues. In December he addressed municipal officials in the town of Chinchina about a campaign to reduce child abuse and animal neglect.



Animal Abuse and Domestic Violence in Native American Populations

Diana Webster, Sarah Deer and Liz Murphy of the [Native America Humane Society](#) presented on "The Link Between Domestic Violence and Animal Abuse in Indian Country" on Dec. 9. The 15th National Indian Nations Conference, held at the Agua Caliente Reservation in Palm Springs, Calif., was dedicated to the theme of Justice for Victims of Crime.

THE LINK... IN THE LEGISLATURES

Laws We're Celebrating

As the 2016 state legislative sessions wrap up, the National Link Coalition is encouraged by several key pieces of legislation that were enacted this year. Join us as we salute these victories that will protect people and animals – and please let us know of new measures that are introduced in the 2017 legislative sessions in your state.

Domestic Violence/Pet Protection Orders



Alaska HB 147 was signed into law on Oct. 27. The law, which takes effect on Jan. 17, 2017, will 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 law also declares pets to be marital property and gives courts authority to decide individual or joint custody when people divorce, with consideration of what would be best for the animal. It also defines an act of animal abuse in this context as domestic violence.



Michigan HB 4478 allows courts to issue protection-from-abuse orders preventing respondents from injuring, torturing, neglecting, threatening, or removing the petitioner's animals. It applies to current or former spouses; individuals with whom the petitioner has a child in common or where there has been a dating relationship; or an individual presently or formerly residing in the same household. The bill was signed by Gov. Rick Snyder on May 3.



Wisconsin SB 97 was signed into law on March 1 by Gov. Scott Walker. Judges or circuit court commissioners issuing temporary restraining orders or injunctions not only in domestic violence cases but also in child abuse, individual-at-risk and harassment situations may order the respondent not to remove, hide, damage, harm, mistreat, or dispose of a household pet. Petitioners or family members acting on their behalf may retrieve a household pet.

Animal Sexual Assault



New Hampshire HB 1547 establishes the crime of bestiality as a Class A misdemeanor for a first offense and a Class B felony for subsequent offenses. Convicted offenders will be required to submit to psychological assessment and counseling at their own expense. The bill was signed in to law in June.



Ohio SB 195 was signed into law by Gov. John Kasich on Dec. 19. The measure, which becomes effective in March 2017, will prohibit a person from engaging in sexual conduct with an animal, and related acts. It will provide for the seizure of the animals involved and authorize the sentencing court to require offenders to undergo psychological evaluation or counseling. The measure also addresses the regulation of dogs sold from pet shops and increases penalties for animal fighting.



Oklahoma HB2398, the "Justice for J.W. Act," would increase the maximum sentence for a person who forces another person to engage in "the detestable and abominable crime against nature" committed "with mankind or with a beast" from the current 10 years to 20 years. The bill passed the House and the Senate and was signed into law on May 6 by Gov. Mary Fallin.

“CASA for Animals”



Connecticut HB 5344 allows courts to appoint attorneys or law school students as advocates for any animals involved in prosecutions concerning custody of the animals or their welfare.

Animal Abuse and Other Crimes



California HR28 encourages the Superintendent of Public Instruction to incorporate humane education in the core curriculum in order to disrupt the cycle of human and animal abuse by decreasing a child’s potential to be abusive or neglectful. The Resolution (not a law) states that compliance with Education Code provisions should include educating students on the principles of kindness and respect for animals and observance of laws, regulations, and policies pertaining to the humane treatment of animals. Though a worthy statement, it is not a mandate and has no practical impact on teachers or students in California schools.



Michigan HB 4353 was signed into law on Dec. 28. The new law, which takes effect in March 2017, will allow animal control and animal protection shelters to consider an individual’s criminal history when determining whether or not to allow that individual to adopt an animal. Individuals who have been convicted of animal abuse will not be able to adopt for at least 5 years following the date of their conviction. The measure also regulates the sale and adoption of dogs and cats from pet shops and animal shelters.

Cross Reporting



Virginia HB802 expands the definition of those who are granted immunity from civil or criminal liability or administrative sanction for reporting, in good faith, suspected animal cruelty from “veterinarian” to “any person regulated by the Board of Veterinary Medicine,” thereby including veterinary technicians. The bill was signed into law on March 1.

THE LINK... IN THE LITERATURE

Assessing the Impact of Humane Education on Disruptive Behaviors

A basic tenet of humane education interventions over 150 years has been that nurturing kindness, compassion and concern for animals will lead to more positive attitudes and behaviors towards other people. Despite this long history, however, few randomized control studies have evaluated the effectiveness of humane education, and most such studies have relied on students’ self-reporting of outcomes. This study, involving fourth-grade, mostly-minority students at four under-served schools in Chicago and New York City, measured teachers’ ratings of attitudes and disruptive behaviors among students taking an 11-week humane education curriculum and a chess club control group. Students participating in the humane education program showed stronger growth of prosocial behaviors but no changes in disruptive behaviors. The results support the effectiveness of a humane education program to teach a relatively large and diverse group of upper elementary students to learn about animal welfare issues and to improve their prosocial behaviors, but behavioral effects were found to be largely limited to behaviors directly addressed by the humane education program.

-- Samuels, W.E., Meers, L.L., & Normando, S. (2016). Improving upper elementary students’ humane attitudes and prosocial behaviors through an in-class humane education program. *Anthrozoös*, 29(4), 597-610.

THE LINK... IN THE NEWS

Couple Charged with Child Endangerment and Cruelty in Snake Hoarding Case

A couple in Wilson, N.Y., were charged with animal cruelty and three counts of endangering the welfare of a child after officials with the Niagara County SPCA removed over 100 snakes, many rats, 15 cats, two miniature pigs and a few dozen birds from a home where dozens of dead snakes and birds were also found. SPCA Executive Director Amy Lewis told the [Niagara Gazette](#) that they received a tip on Dec. 6 about the animals' welfare, and a search warrant was quickly obtained. The owner of the animals, who was not named, signed over all the animals to the shelter, where SPCA officials were asking the public for donations of terrariums, heat lamps, bedding, food, and supplies to care for the animals. The farm animals were left in place as their condition did not appear to be in immediate danger.



Amy Lewis examines some of the seized snakes

Convicted Abuser Gets Criminal Record Expunged

A nurse who was convicted in 2013 on seven felony charges of physically abusing a severely autistic man – and whose criminal history includes a mistrial on murder charges and a felony conviction for animal abuse – was able to get his criminal record expunged, a legal move that infuriated family members in San Diego.



Kimberlee and Mark Oakley set up secret surveillance cameras that **Michael Garritson** captured Michael Garritson repeatedly abusing their severely autistic adult son, James, while serving as his caretaker (*See the [October 2012 LINK-Letter](#)*). The abuse included James' hair being pulled, his arms being twisted and his eyes being gouged. Garritson was sentenced to one year in jail out of a possible nine years but was given credit for time served by the time the case came to court, [CBS8-TV](#) reported.

Under California law, Garritson was able to have his complete criminal record expunged. Although he lost his license as a registered nurse, he will be able to apply for jobs as a private caregiver without having to reveal his prior felonies. "He is legally entitled to this relief," said Deputy District Attorney Natalie Villaflor. "It is not a debate over whether it's a good idea or not. That's a decision the legislature makes."

Garritson was tried for second-degree murder in the 1980s in connection with the death of a 13-month-old boy under his care. A deadlocked jury in that case led to a mistrial. In 2002, Garritson pled guilty to felony animal neglect when more than 150 dogs were seized from his home.

The Oakleys plan to take the issue to the California State Legislature so future convicted felons of this type cannot have their records erased. "He is going to go on and do this again," said Mark Oakley. "His past is checkered with abuse."



Spurned Woman Charged with Burglary and Killing Dog

A Minneapolis woman is facing burglary charges for allegedly taking the dog of a woman who rejected her romantic overtures and torturing it to death. Police told the [St. Paul Pioneer Press](#) that Elizabeth Rose Osterbauer, 24, broke into the home of Shelly Byzewski, whom she had met at a dog rescue agency where Osterbauer worked, in December 2015 and stole the dog, a 3-year-old miniature pinscher named “Ducky Momo.”

Elizabeth Osterbauer

Witnesses testified that they saw the dognapping and that Osterbauer took the dog to a park area where she killed the dog by stomping on it before drowning it in a marsh. Byzewski said Osterbauer had been stalking her when she did not reciprocate her romantic feelings. Court records showed that Osterbauer was convicted in 2015 on misdemeanor charges of having multiple dogs running at large in Shelburne County.

The complaint also alleges that Osterbauer broke into Byzewski’s home in June 2016, strewing cat litter throughout four rooms and plugging up the toilet with cat litter.

Man Wanted on Felony Assault and Animal Cruelty Charges Surrenders

Police in Kingsport, Tenn. announced the arrest of James H. Winston, 23, who surrendered to authorities after being wanted on felony charges of aggravated domestic assault, aggravated kidnapping and animal cruelty. The charges allege that on Nov. 27, Winston grabbed his unnamed girlfriend, 19, by the throat and repeatedly hit her on the face, choked her, and continued to beat her.



James H. Winston

Police told the [Kingsport Times-News](#) that he took her phone and keys and said he “needed to spend some quality time with the cat.” On the following day, she reportedly observed Winston repeatedly beating it against a kitchen counter and floor. She was later able to retrieve her phone, texted friends for help, and fled the scene with her cat. Police said the woman suffered a black eye and extensive bruising to her arms, shoulders and neck. The cat was treated for severe head trauma and a broken jaw.

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LINK TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

Jan. 16-20, 2017 – Salt Lake City, Utah: “The Cycle of Violence” will be included in the week-long Module C classes offered in the National Animal Care & Control Association’s National Animal Control and Humane Officers (NACHO) [Training Academy](#).

Jan. 18 – Pittsfield, Mass.: The [Human/Animal Violence Education Network \(HAVEN\)](#) will hold its regular meeting at the Berkshire Humane Society.

Jan. 23 – Thompsonville, Mich.: Allie Phillips will present on Therapy Animals Supporting Kids at the Prosecuting Attorneys Association of Michigan’s [conference](#) on Emerging Trends in Child Abuse and Neglect.

Jan. 19 and 25 – West Palm Beach, Fla.: The [South Florida Link Coalition](#) will hold a training meeting and its regular monthly meeting.

Feb. 5 – Washington, D.C.: [The National Coalition on Violence Against Animals](#) will meet.

Feb. 11-12, 2017 – Orlando, Fla.: Randy Lockwood will present on responding to animal hoarding at the [Florida Animal Control Association](#) Conference.

Feb. 22 – Minneapolis, Minn.: Randy Lockwood and Laura Niestat will conduct a day-long training on Animal Cruelty Investigations - The Role of the Veterinarian at the 120th annual [Minnesota Veterinary Medical Association](#) meeting.

Feb. 23 – Columbus, Ohio: Rachel Touroo will present on Veterinary Forensics at the [Midwest Veterinary Conference](#).

Mar. 6-10 – Phoenix, Ariz.: “The Cycle of Violence” will be included in the week-long Module C classes offered in the National Animal Care & Control Association’s National Animal Control and Humane Officers (NACHO) [Training Academy](#).

Mar. 9 – Hammonton, N.J.: Phil Arkow will train staff of the New Jersey [Division of Child Protection and Permanency](#) on “Animal Abuse and Dangerous Animals as Risk Factors for Child Abuse and Other Family Violence.”

Mar. 13-17 – Knoxville, Tenn.: Bethanie Poe will present on “The Link between Human and Animal Violence,” and Jenny Edwards will present on “Understanding Bestiality and Its Application to Veterinary Social Work,” as part of the University of Tennessee’s [Veterinary Social Work](#) intensive.

Mar. 16-18 – Seattle, Wash.: Jenny Edwards will present on “Bestiality and the Link to Human Sexual Abuse and Offending” at the [American Psychology-Law Society conference](#).

Mar. 20-24 – Dallas, Texas: “The Cycle of Violence” will be offered in Module C of the National Animal Care & Control Association’s National Animal Control and Humane Officers (NACHO) [Training Academy](#).

Mar. 30 – Madison, Wis.: Randy Lockwood will present on “Forensic Psychology Meets Veterinary Forensic Pathology: Making the Connection” at the [Wisconsin VMA Conference](#) on “What’s Your Place in Animal Welfare?”

Mar. 31 – Nashville, Tenn.: Phil Arkow will present four programs in a Link track at the [American Animal Hospital Association’s](#) Yearly Conference.

April 2 – Plano, Texas: “Correlation between Animal Cruelty and Crimes Against Person” will be presented in the Texas Animal Control Association’s [T.C.C.I. course 101](#).

Apr. 22 – Austin, Texas: Phil Arkow will speak on The Link at the [Texas Unites for Animals](#) conference.

Apr. 24-25 – Grand Junction, Colo.: “Changing Societal Attitudes about Animal Abuse and Human Violence” and “The Human-Animal Bond in Domestic Violence Cases” will be presented at the Mesa County Domestic Violence Task Force’s [Domestic Violence Prevention Academy](#).

May 11 – Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.: Dan DeSousa and Nelson Ferry will present on “The critical role of animal control officers in the FBI’s National Incident-Based Reporting System at the Humane Society of the U.S.’ [Animal Care Expo](#).

May 16-19 – New York City, N.Y.: The 10th Annual [International Veterinary Forensic Sciences Association](#) conference, sponsored by ASPCA, will feature many presentations highlighting collaboration between professionals in law enforcement, veterinary medicine, social services and others to address animal cruelty and its connection to other societal issues. The keynote speaker will be NYC Police Commissioner James O’Neil.

July 28-30 – Ithaca, N.Y.: Randy Lockwood, Stacy Wolf and Robert Reisman will present multiple workshops and a mock trial at ASPCA/Cornell Maddie’s® Shelter Medicine Program [Conference](#). Lockwood’s keynote address will be “Investigating Animal Cruelty – The Past , Present and Future.”

Sept. 8 – Regina, Sask., Canada: Phil Arkow will discuss “A Practical Guide for an Effective response by Veterinary Professionals to Animal Cruelty, Abuse and Neglect” at the [Saskatchewan Veterinary Medical Association’s](#) 2017 Conference.

Sept. 9 – Bellevue, Wash.: Phil Arkow will discuss “The Dark Side of the Human-Animal Bond” at the 40th anniversary celebration of [Pet Partners](#).

Nov. 6-10 – Sanford, Fla.: “The Cycle of Violence” will be included in the week-long Module C classes offered in the National Animal Care & Control Association’s National Animal Control and Humane Officers (NACHO) [Training Academy](#).

Dec. 4-6 – Ottawa, Ont., Canada: The inaugural Canadian Link Conference will be held, under the auspices of the [Canadian Federation of Humane Societies](#).

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