



# NATIONAL LINK COALITION

Working together to stop violence against people and animals

The LINK-Letter Vol. 10, No. 3 March 2017

A monthly report of news from THE NATIONAL RESOURCE CENTER



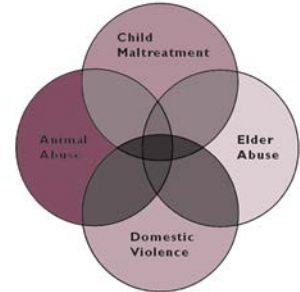
ON THE LINK BETWEEN ANIMAL ABUSE AND HUMAN VIOLENCE



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

[Phil Arkow](#), Coordinator and Editor

**SUBSCRIBE – It's Free!!**



## ANIMAL ABUSE AND... DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

### Federal PAWS Act Re-Introduced



Sen. Dean Heller

The historic Pet and Women Safety Act – a unique, bipartisan, bicameral measure that would extend across the U.S. protection orders that include pets, anti-stalking measures that involve animals, and make federal funding available for domestic violence shelters to become pet-friendly – has been re-introduced in the U.S. Senate and House after getting stalled in the gridlock that marked the 114<sup>th</sup> Congress.

Sens .Gary Peters (D-Mich.) and Dean Heller (R-Nev.) re-introduced the PAWS Act, **S.322**, in the Senate. Reps. Katherine Clark (D-Mass.) and Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-Fla.) are leading the reintroduction of the PAWS Act, **H.R. 909**, in the House – with 196 co-sponsors.

The measures ([See the April 2015 LINK-Letter](#)) aim to protect victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking and dating violence from the emotional and psychological trauma caused by violence against their pets. The sponsors cite multiple studies that have shown that domestic abusers often seek to manipulate or intimidate their victims by threatening or harming their pets, and statistics from the ASPCA that only 3% of domestic violence shelters across the country accept pets.



Sen .Gary Peters



Rep. Katherine Clark

“Abusers often exploit the emotional attachment victims have with their pets, leaving victims of domestic violence stuck choosing between their own safety or leaving a beloved pet in harm’s way,” said Sen. Peters. “I’m proud to join my colleagues in introducing this bipartisan legislation that will help empower victims to leave abusive situations, get a fresh start and keep their pets who are treasured members of their families.”

“I am committed to combating domestic violence and ensuring survivors are provided with the services they need to heal. No victim of this crime should have to choose between their safety and the safety of their pet, which is why I’m glad Nevada has facilities in both Reno and Las Vegas that serve victims of domestic violence, their children, and pets,” said Sen. Heller. “I am



Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen

proud to introduce this critical legislation with my colleagues to ensure domestic violence survivors across the country receive the assistance they need to leave an abusive environment.”

The PAWS Act would prohibit threats or acts of violence against a victim’s pet in interstate stalking and interstate violation of protection orders. It would allocate \$3 million annually through 2021 in grant funding for emergency and transitional housing, short-term shelter and housing assistance for victims with pets. Grants could also be used for support services to help victims to locate and secure safe housing that allows pets, and for pet-related services such as pet transportation and veterinary care. It would require abusers to make restitution to the victim for costs incurred for veterinary services.

Grants could also be used for training on The Link between domestic violence and animal abuse, and identifying best practices. Grant recipients could include victim service providers, coalitions, community-based organizations, nonprofits, animal shelters, and animal welfare organizations.

“Abusers frequently target their victims’ pets, which can cause victims to delay leaving dangerous situations, incur costly veterinary bills for their pets’ injuries and endure additional trauma from seeing their much-loved animals tortured,” said Kim Gandy, President and CEO of the National Network to End Domestic Violence. “The PAWS Act will help domestic violence shelters provide resources for victims fleeing abusive situations so they can find a welcome home for themselves and their pets.”

“No one should have to make the impossible choice between leaving an abusive situation or protecting their pet,” said Nancy Perry, senior vice president of ASPCA Government Relations. “Studies demonstrate that abusers often intentionally target pets to exert control over their partners, and as many as 25% of domestic violence survivors have reported returning to an abusive partner out of concern for the safety of their animal. The PAWS Act will provide valuable resources to give victims and their pets the security they need to escape a dangerous environment.”

“Many states allow pets to be included in restraining orders, but what happens when a domestic violence victim must go live with family in another state where pets are not covered?” said Michael Markarian, president of the Humane Society Legislative Fund. “We must have a national policy that safeguards the pets of abuse victims, and recognizes that domestic violence impacts all members of the family—including the four-legged.”

“Too often victims of domestic violence fear leaving an abusive situation, and when violence is inflicted on their pets, victims are not only stuck in a traumatic environment, they also have to pay for veterinary bills to help their pets heal,” said David LaBahn, President and CEO of the Association of Prosecuting Attorneys. “The PAWS Act will provide law enforcement with the tools to ensure justice for victims of domestic violence whose pets are harmed by their abusers. I applaud these legislators for their leadership on addressing a very important issue.”

The PAWS Act is supported by the National Link Coalition, the National Network to End Domestic Violence, the ASPCA, the Humane Society of the United States, the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, the Association of Prosecuting Attorneys, the Sheltering Animals & Families Together (SAF-T) Program, the Animal Legal Defense Fund, the Animal Welfare Institute, RedRover, the National Animal Care & Control Association, the National District Attorneys Association, the American Veterinary Medical Association, YWCA USA, the American Kennel Club, the Fraternal Order of Police, and the National Sheriffs’ Association.

## Australian Pet Sheltering Program Can't Keep Up with Demand

The organizers of a “life-saving” domestic violence program in the Australian state of Victoria went on national television in February to say they are struggling to meet the high demands for their foster care program for pets, resulting in women and children staying longer in high-risk and violent homes.

The Safe Steps Family Violence Response Centre receives 90,000 calls for help each year. Of those, 9,000 are from people concerned about their pets, and in 40% of those cases, the animals have been hurt. The Centre’s Pets-At-Risk Program finds animal shelters for the pets of victims who previously chose not to leave dangerous homes due to their abuser’s threats to the safety of their animals.

The program helps find shelter for the pets of 3,500 families each year at a variety of sites, including the Lort Smith Animal Hospital, where chief executive David Herman told the [Australian Broadcasting Corp.](#) that they are struggling to meet the high demand. “Despite our efforts we turn away as many animals as we can help each year,” he said.

The Victoria State Government started [funding the program in 2015 with \\$100,000 provided over four years](#). Centre Chief Executive Annette Gillespie said it was a groundbreaking move by the government at the time but that more help was needed. “We would very much like to see funding to increase and for there to be longevity of that funding, for it to be sustainable,” she said.



**Christine Craik**

Christine Craik was in an abusive marriage for 13 years and told the TV network that her husband used her love for animals to prevent her and her children from leaving him. “Fairly early on I think he realized he could control me if he hurt the animals, or looked like he was going to hurt the animals. It would be nothing for him to punch them, kick them, try to brand them. He actually mortally wounded one of our golden retrievers. I got my worst injuries trying to stop him hurting our cat.”

Craik said she wanted to leave but had nowhere to take her animals and was scared about what might happen to them. “There were people who might have taken a small dog, but not a whole heap of animals like that,” she said. “It was a horrible enough situation for the kids and I to live in ... if he’d done that to our animals and killed them all when we left, I’m not sure how I would have handled the guilt and I’m sure it would have had a huge impact on my children.”

Gillespie said that Craik’s story was a common one. “It’s been known for a long time in the family violence services sector that harm to pets is one of the critical tactics that the perpetrator can use and it often means that women find it difficult to leave the relationship knowing their pets are likely to be harmed if they do,” she said.

“This program assists women to leave safely and feel confident that their pets will also be safe, so essentially it is a life-saving program.”

## Paws for Peace Walk to Raise Funds and Awareness in Orlando

The 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Paws for Peace Walk – a leisurely stroll for people and pets to benefit the Paws for Peace kennels at the pet-friendly [Harbor House of Central Florida](#) in Orlando – will be held on April 22. The event raises funds and awareness about domestic violence and its impact on pets and their owners. Harbor House is Orange County’s only state-certified domestic abuse service provider and has the only on-site kennel in Central Florida for the pets of domestic violence survivors. The kennel removes a key barrier to survivors seeking help and safety and ensures that no family members are left behind in an abusive home.



## Rhode Island Bill Would Award Pet Custody in Animals’ Best Interests

Following pioneering legislation enacted in Alaska, and a new bill introduced in the Hawaii legislature (See the [February 2017 LINK-Letter](#)), the Rhode Island General Assembly is considering a measure which would require courts to consider the best interest of the animal in awarding possession of a domestic animal in a divorce or separation proceeding.



State Rep. Charlene Lima, sponsor of the bill, told the [Providence Journal](#) that the family pet is currently the only party without legal representation when divorce settlements turn nasty. “Because pets are so much a part of peoples’ families, we need a judge to consider them and to make the best decision for the welfare of the animal,” she said. [Rep. Charlene Lima](#)

**H5556** was introduced on Feb. 16 and has been referred to the House Judiciary Committee.

## Colorado Conference Considers Pets and People Co-Sheltering



Eighty participants representing a wide variety of Colorado’s domestic violence and animal care organizations gathered in Denver on March 2 for a conference called **Together: Co-sheltering People and Pets of Domestic Violence**. The event was hosted by the Institute for Human-Animal Connection and the SAF-T Program at the University of Denver in collaboration with the Colorado Coalition Against Domestic Violence.

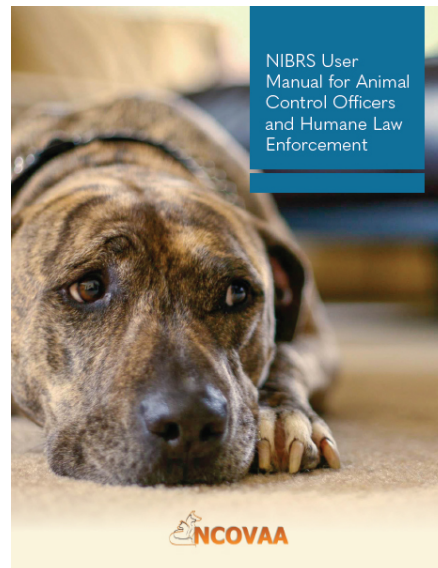
## *THE LINK AND THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM*

### **NIBRS User Manual Will Help Animal Control and Humane Agencies Report Animal Abuse to FBI**

As the FBI continues its implementation of the pioneering NIBRS platform which, for the first time, will gather data on animal abuse offenses, one missing piece of the plan has been how to include animal control and humane law enforcement officers. These personnel investigate the majority of animal cruelty cases but cannot enter these data unless they work for a police or sheriff's office that is a participating member.

A preliminary survey by the National Link Coalition finds that in 78% of more than 2,500 cities and counties, the primary agency for investigating animal cruelty is an animal control or humane society/SPCA. Law enforcement agencies are the go-to reporting site for less than one-quarter of cases.

This gap in the system is now being addressed with the publication of a training manual that will enable these officers to report cases to the FBI. The National Animal Care & Control Association (NACA) and the Animal Welfare Institute (AWI) have partnered to publish the *NIBRS User Manual for Animal Control Officers and Humane Law Enforcement*. Unveiled at February's meeting of the National Coalition on Violence Against Animals (NCOVAA), the *Manual* aims to ensure that officers are aware of and fully equipped for their new and critical role in reporting incidents to the FBI.



NIBRS – the National Incident-Based Reporting System – is used by law enforcement agencies in many states. Historically, animal cruelty cases were not specifically itemized, leading to a lack of data as to how many cases are reported, investigated, and prosecuted. In January 2016, the FBI included simple and gross neglect (animal hoarding), intentional abuse and torture, organized animal abuse (animal fighting), and animal sexual abuse in the system ([See the March 2016 LINK-Letter](#)).



**George W. Harding IV**

“Given the link between animal cruelty and violent crime, NACA is proud of the collaboration with AWI to create the *NIBRS User Manual*,” said George W. Harding, IV, NACA executive director. “This tool will ensure animal control and humane enforcement officers have a way to report the vast number of cases not seen by other law enforcement agencies, thus providing truer representation of animal cruelty statistics.”

“Our organization led the effort to include animal cruelty in the FBI crime data reporting system,” said Mary Lou Randour, AWI senior advisor of animal cruelty programs and training. “Now, we are honored to partner with NACA to ensure that all potential reporters of animal cruelty crime are given the resources and training they need to develop a truly representative national database of such crime.”



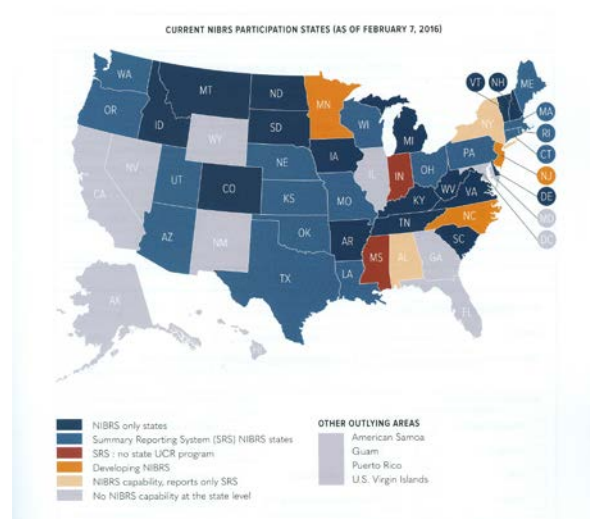
**Mary Lou Randour**

In addition to providing reporting guidance and an introduction to the NIBRS animal cruelty incident report, the manual contains:

- a reporting form, developed in cooperation with the FBI, compatible with the NIBRS reporting system requirements; and
- a template for a Memorandum of Understanding that can be used to formalize relationships between an animal control agency and local police department for sharing data on animal cruelty incidents. Since the FBI does not yet consider most animal control and humane organizations to be law enforcement agencies, these groups must work with local law enforcement to ensure that these data are captured.

While participation in the NIBRS reporting program is not mandatory, the *Manual* notes that the more information that is sent to the FBI, the easier it will be to gauge the amount of crime in a specific area and allow for a more comprehensive review of the relationship between animal cruelty and other crimes in the community.

“Animal cruelty is a serious crime against not only the animals, but also our society as a whole. We are all aware of the fact that animal-related crimes can be an indicator of other crimes or future crimes,” the *Manual* concludes. “By knowing where these crimes are occurring and the demographics of who is committing these crimes, law enforcement agencies and animal control/humane organizations can take proactive steps to address problems in areas with high rates of animal abuse.”



Map of states currently participating in NIBRS

The 32-page *Manual* is available as a free download through the websites of the [National Link Coalition](#), [AWI](#), and [NACA](#). NACA will also be conducting training programs and answering questions from agencies who want to learn how to fill out the reports.

### *Permission to Reprint*

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](http://www.nationallinkcoalition.org)

## Animals May Be Protected in Navajo Court Orders

What may be the first example of animals being included in domestic violence protection-from-abuse orders on Native American reservations has come to our attention. The Navajo Nation, 300,000 residents live in Arizona, New Mexico and Utah, strengthened sentencing provisions in its Criminal Code in 2014 to better protect public safety.



The 132-page Act, encompassing dozens of criminal offenses, included Subchapter 24: the Violence Against Family Act. Within this section, “family violence” is comprised of numerous offenses including stalking. The nine offenses which define stalking include “Making threats to harm the victim, the victim’s children, relatives, friends, pets or livestock.”

Stalking victims can obtain a Family Violence Court Order to protect themselves. Penalties for violating such an order include imprisonment for up to 180 days and/or a fine ranging from \$500 to \$1,500. Subsequent convictions increase the penalties up to one year and \$5,000.

The provisions are part of the Navajo Nation’s Domestic Abuse Protection Act, passed in 1993 to protect men, women, children, elders, the disabled, and other vulnerable persons from all forms of domestic abuse. The Act was designed to be “liberally construed” and interpreted in order to achieve its purposes.

The Act was predicated upon the premises that many persons are beaten, raped, harassed, killed, or subjected to abuse within the family and clan setting. It noted that children suffer lasting emotional damage as direct targets of domestic abuse, and by witnessing the infliction of domestic abuse on other family and clan members.



An aging Navajo population, the lack of services for elderly citizens, and a changing family structure also dictated the need for the law. Domestic abuse in all its forms was declared to be not a “family matter” but rather a major health and law enforcement problem to the Nation that could be prevented, reduced, and deterred through intervention. Legislative efforts to remedy domestic abuse were said to maintain the integrity of the family, clan and of Navajo culture and society.

It is not known how often these protection orders have been utilized, or whether similar protections exist in other Native American tribal lands. A study ([See the June 2016 LINK-Letter](#)) by the National Institute of Justice reported that 16.8% of Native American female victims and 2.4% of male victims had experienced their animals being threatened, hurt or taken away as a form of psychological aggression.

## Register Now for Discounts at Texas State Bar Animal Law Institute



March 17 is the deadline for significant early-bird registration discounts at the 2017 [Texas State Bar Animal Law Institute](#) in Austin. Ten presentations will address civil and criminal law matters affecting The Link, veterinary forensics, and animal cruelty investigations and prosecutions. CEUs will be available for attorneys, veterinarians, law enforcement and animal control officers.

## Massachusetts Bill Would Mandate Cross-Reporting, Allow Courts to Consider Cruelty Regarding Defendants' Dangerousness



Sen. Bruce Tarr

An omnibus animal welfare measure in the 190<sup>th</sup> General Court of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts would add the crimes of animal cruelty and animal fighting as specifically enumerated offenses which would allow the prosecution to ask for pre-trial detention on the grounds of the defendant's dangerousness.

**SD.949**, introduced by Senate Minority Leader Bruce Tarr with 32 co-sponsors, would also mandate an extensive process of cross-reporting in Massachusetts. The bill would require employees or contractors of the Department of Children & Families, Department of Elder Affairs investigators, and Disabled Persons Protection Commission investigators to report suspected animal abuse. The bill would add animal control officers as mandatory reporters of child abuse, elder abuse and abuse against disabled persons.

The bill, entitled "An act to protect animal welfare and safety in cities and towns," contains a host of other animal welfare concerns including animal fighting, banning specific breeds, and requiring landlords to check for abandoned animals when properties are abandoned. The bill, dubbed "PAWS II," builds on the provision of the Protect Animal Welfare and Safety Act passed in 2014 in the wake of the notorious "Puppy Doe" case.

## British Legislators, Academics Team Up Over The Link



Anna Turley, MP

Researchers from Teesside University in the U.K. have been meeting with Anna Turley, a Member of Parliament from Redcar, North Yorkshire, who has introduced a measure that would increase the maximum sentences available to the court for specified offenses related to animal cruelty ([See the December 2016 LINK-Letter](#)). The researchers impressed upon Turley how findings in Eastern Europe, the U.S., and the U.K. reveal that violence breeds violence and that animal abuse is closely correlated with domestic violence.

Turley plans to reference the research when the measure, Private Member's Bill No. 43, is debated in Parliament on March 24.

Turley and the researchers met recently at Teesside University where they discussed their shared aim in promoting a change in attitude towards animal cruelty. The meeting was filmed and an informative [video is available online](#).

The researchers found that in rural areas, where animal cruelty was more socially acceptable, adolescent males were more likely to abuse animals and had higher exposure to domestic violence.

"We found that empathy is an important factor. Children who had more empathy were less likely to commit animal abuse," said Professor Paul van Schaik, who worked on the research.

Malcolm Plant, founder of the Making the Link study project ([See the July/August 2016 LINK-Letter](#)), said, "Our study has underlined the link between animal abuse and human abuse and the next step is to

use this research to explore animal abuse cases where there is any associated link to abuse of humans. Animal abuse impacts on individuals, families and can permeate a whole society.”

“I’ve had a great conversation with the team about their research, which has some incredible findings, particularly around how children and people who abuse animals often go on to abuse human beings and the link between issues such as lack of empathy,” said Turley. “Research such as this is absolutely vital and has real potential to influence and prepare the way so that we can potentially change the law or try to do different things to bring the academic research out of the university and into making a difference to public policy.”

## Bestiality Bills Introduced in Kentucky, Vermont and West Virginia

Three more bills prohibiting sexual assault against animals have been introduced into state legislatures, bringing to seven the number of measures being considered by state legislators as the topic of interspecies sexual abuse becomes less uncomfortable to discuss.



**Kentucky HB 480** was introduced by Rep. Joni L. Jenkins on Feb. 17. It would create a new offense of sexual assault against an animal and allow a peace officer to seize an animal if there is probable cause to believe the offense has occurred. Accepted animal husbandry and veterinary medical practices, such as artificial insemination, would be exempted. Courts could require psychiatric or psychological counseling and bar offenders from owning any animals, or residing in a household where animals are present, for a specific period of time. The offense would be a Class A misdemeanor unless the animal suffers death or serious injury, in which case it would be a Class D felony. A parallel measure in Kentucky, **HB 143**, would pertain only to dogs and cats and would be a Class D felony. The bills are in the Judiciary Committee.

Rep. Joni Jenkins

**West Virginia HB 2664**, introduced on Feb. 22 by Rep. Kayla Kessinger with five co-sponsors, would add a new criminal offense of bestiality to the state’s crimes against chastity, morality and decency. The statute would pertain to individuals who engage in, abet, observe, or promote bestiality, or permit it to occur on their premises, or advertise for animals to be so used, or induce a child to commit bestiality. The offense would be a misdemeanor, or a felony upon previous convictions or serious bodily injury or death to the animal. Courts would order offenders to surrender all their animals, prohibit ownership of animals for five or 15 years, and undergo psychiatric or psychological evaluation or counseling. The bill is in the Judiciary Committee.



Rep. Kayla Kessinger



Reps. McCormack and Bissonnette

**Vermont H.325** was introduced on Feb. 17 by Reps. Curtis McCormack and Clement Bissonnette. The bill would prohibit sexual contact or fondling between a person and an animal, possessing, advertising or selling an animal for sexual purposes, abetting, observing or participating, and forcing a child under 16 to engage in sexual contact with an animal. It would exempt bona fide veterinary and animal husbandry purposes. Offenders would face up to three to five years in prison and/or a fine of \$5,000 to \$7,500. The bill is in the House Judiciary Committee.

## ANIMAL ABUSE AND... VETERINARY MEDICINE

### Veterinary Forensics Conference Comes to New York City

The 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of the [International Veterinary Forensic Sciences Association](#) will be relocating from its traditional Florida venue to New York City, where several key Link initiatives in the Big Apple and multidisciplinary approaches will be highlighted as part of an extensive three-day training program.

The 24 presentations include:

- Rob Reisman, Elizabeth Brandler and Ellen Vancelette discussing “Domestic Violence and Animal Cruelty in NYC.”
- Margaret Doyle and Brad Nichols presenting on “A Multidisciplinary Approach to Investigating Animal Crimes – The Canadian Advantage.”
- Gary Patronek speaking on “How Does Forensic Mental Health Assessment Complement Veterinary Forensics in Cases of Animal Maltreatment?”
- Mandy O’Hara discussing “Recognizing and Reporting Non-Accidental Injuries: Lessons Learned from Human Medicine.”
- Renee Hendriks speaking about “The Role of Veterinary Nurses and Technicians and Animal Ambulance Staff in Situations of Animal Abuse”
- The keynote speaker will be New York City Police Commissioner James P. O’Neill

The conference, sponsored by the ASPCA, will spotlight the unique collaboration between the ASPCA, NYPD and NYC District Attorney’s Offices. The conference will attract an international body of veterinarians, veterinary technicians, law enforcement officials, prosecutors, forensic scientists, animal welfare and human services professionals, and students. Continuing education credits will be available.

A complete schedule, discounted hotel accommodations and registration information are available on the [IVFSA website](#). Register by March 15 to save with early-bird discounts!



Save more victims of animal cruelty  
Ensure successful investigations and prosecutions

May 16th – 18th, 2017  
New York City

**RECOMMENDED FOR:**  
Veterinarians, Vet Techs, Law Enforcement,  
Prosecutors, Forensic Scientists,  
Animal Behavior Experts, Students,  
Animal Welfare & Human Service Professionals

Continuing education credits  
will be offered.

For detailed agenda and registration visit  
[aspcapro.org/IVFSA-conference](http://aspcapro.org/IVFSA-conference)

Early bird savings available through March 15.

**ASPCA**  
WE ARE THEIR VOICE™

INTERNATIONAL VETERINARY FORENSIC SCIENCES ASSOCIATION  
**10<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference**  
A multidisciplinary approach to combating animal cruelty  
Keynote speaker: NYC Police Commissioner James P. O’Neill



Rob Reisman

### Veterinary Forensics Spotlited in New York Times

Meanwhile, veterinary forensics made another significant inroad in the Big Apple when Dr. Rob Reisman, animal cruelty investigator at the ASPCA in New York, was profiled in the “Vocations” column in the [New York Times](#)’ Business section on Sunday, March 5.

## Veterinarians Under-Represented in Link Research

A literature review compiled by Brazilian veterinarians summarizes numerous studies that have reported a connection between animal abuse and interpersonal violence, but argues that veterinarians have been considerably under-represented compared to research from other fields. The authors reported that 97.9% of 96 journal articles published between 1960 and 2016 found association between animal abuse and violence against people. Although veterinarians play an important role in public health and animal welfare, only seven articles (7.3%) were published in the field of veterinary medicine. Studies report that between 42.8% and 86% of veterinarians know about the Link. However, most veterinarians are not being trained to intervene in cases of animal abuse and human violence. Furthermore, none of the articles originated from South America or Africa. The authors emphasize the importance of educating veterinarians about this topic and their participation in this area, particularly in a global context.

-- Monsalve, S., Ferreira, F., & Garcia, R. (2017, in press). *The connection between animal abuse and interpersonal violence: A review from the veterinary perspective. Research in Veterinary Science.* <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.rvsc.2017.02.025>.

## NEWS FROM LOCAL LINK COALITIONS

### Links Group UK Reflects on a Year's Worth of Progress

Our British counterpart, The Links Group UK, is reflecting on their progress in 2016 and noting that their work is really being recognized and appreciated. "2016 was definitely a great year!" exclaims Chair Freda Scott-Park.

In April the group was asked to head up the press conference at the British Small Animal Veterinary Association's annual conference. "It was the best attended press launch they had held," she tells The LINK-Letter. Naomi Breeze performed a dramatization of her story of abuse, which helped participants to better understand why women stay in these relationships for long.



Freda Scott-Park

In addition to launching two updated guidances to help veterinarians report suspected animal abuse (*See the [October 2016 LINK-Letter](#)*), there were discussions about a forthcoming parallel module for human healthcare professionals.



Meanwhile, the BBC has expressed interest in the veterinary training day. Links Group speakers presented at conferences in Canada, Portugal and Australia, discussing such topics as the behavior of animals who have been in an abusive household, and domestic violence and animal abuse from an international perspective. A presentation by Rebecca Garcia about [One Welfare - A Platform for Improving Human and Animal Welfare](#) described an inexpensive platform for fostering interdisciplinary collaboration that would help reduce suffering of vulnerable people and animals.

The Link was mentioned in a recent Westminster Hall debate on Animal Cruelty Sentencing. During the debate, Angela Smith MP and Rob Flello MP highlighted the inter-relatedness between human and animal violence.

## County-wide Task Force Resolves Frustrations of Reporting and Investigating Link Cases

For the average citizen who suspects a situation might involve animal abuse, trying to be a good Samaritan and reporting the case is often an exercise in frustration. Especially in areas where the local humane society, SPCA or animal control agency is not authorized with police powers to investigate, “passing the buck” often becomes the rule. The humane group tells the caller to call the police or sheriff; law enforcement, for whom animal issues are not a priority and who have not been trained in animal welfare issues, tell the caller to contact the shelter. Meanwhile, budget cuts in many areas have eliminated animal control positions. Callers give up in frustration and abuse cases – which may be precursors to interpersonal violence – go unreported.

A solution to this dilemma can be found in the creation of area Link coalitions or Animal Cruelty Task Forces. Such a group has had dramatic success in the Watertown area of Jefferson County, N.Y. Jennifer Risser, DVM, shared with The LINK-Letter their experiences which we hope will encourage other communities to follow suit:



**Jennifer Risser, DVM, and a ring-tailed lemur**

“In Jefferson County, N.Y., we have several law enforcement entities, including the Sheriff’s Department, the State Troopers, and local police (including village and city police). We also have a county dog control with several officers, who are overseen by the Dog Warden. County Dog Control are not peace officers, and although they house dogs who are evidence in cases and respond to dogs in distress (hit-by-cars, strays, etc.) they are not able to arrest a suspect or remove an animal without the assistance of local law enforcement.

“Our practice is the clinic that is contracted by Dog Control, so we are the ones who examine, assess, treat, and/or euthanize the cases that are brought in. (One issue is that Dog Control does not handle cats, so we are often stuck when it comes to feline victims.)

“I have been a veterinarian in this community for 14 years. Over those years, we struggled with Dog Control and local law enforcement when it came to an abuse case. Like many other areas, the law told us to call the dog warden, and the dog warden told us to call law enforcement. As a veterinarian, it was extremely frustrating, and I have a relationship with these entities. I can only imagine how difficult it is for the average layperson. And I am sure that many animals suffered due to this disconnect.

“A year ago a young and forward-thinking Assistant District Attorney, who was passionate about animal rights (and states that is why she became a lawyer) started the Jefferson County Animal Abuse Task Force. This group is a conglomeration of lawyers, law enforcement, veterinarians, and shelter personnel. The group meets regularly to discuss cases, laws, and problem areas of the county, as well as to exchange legal information, and more importantly, contact information.

“Several things happened when this Task Force was established. The most important was that the Dog Warden and the local police chief sat down together and established responsibility (which, in Jefferson County, falls on law enforcement). It also broke down a barrier of communication that had been present for over 20 years. A system was established, and this was shared with the community so as to educate

those concerned with a possible case on who to call and what to expect. By involving the shelter and veterinary community, we have been able to develop a protocol for cats, and for animals in need of veterinary care.

“The ADA has also established educational opportunities for law enforcement officers on how to assess an animal abuse case, how to collect evidence and what questions to ask. On the veterinary side, four of the 11 local clinics have representation on the Task Force, and have increased the awareness of our staff and clients. I am so very proud of the accomplishments we have made, and that we continue to pursue.



“As with most animal cruelty departments in small towns, our funding is limited. In fact, the DA made it clear that no funding was going to be allotted for the Task Force. We are able to access funds from the county on dog cases through Dog Control, however, there is no funding for feline victims. Our clinic has been involved in several cases involving cats, and our work is either *pro bono* or we use the “Angel Fund” we created to help strays that need medical attention. There is no funding for expert witnesses, advanced diagnostics, referral or extreme medical measures. So we, as general practitioners, will muddle through necropsies and evidence as best we can, and are expected to make “expert witness” statements, with limited resources.

“Despite the lack of funds, we have been very effective in closing the communication gap and establishing a chain of responsibility which better serves our community and our victims. We are still a work in progress, especially with response to complaints, as many law officers are still learning their responsibility, and we face many of prejudices. But with open communication and the education of those involved, we have been slowly turning the tide. Over the last year, since our Task Force has been in place, we have increased our abuse arrests by approximately 20%.”



Amber Ahern

### South Florida Coalition Plans Fundraiser

The [South Florida Link Coalition](#) is planning a 5K Fun Run for The Link on Saturday, April 29, in Okeeheelee Park in West Palm Beach. Coalition coordinator Amber Ahern also tells *The LINK-Letter* that coalition members facilitated five successful rescues of pets of domestic violence victims needing shelter in January, and that the coalition’s hotline received 20 calls that month. Ahern announced that the group’s monthly meetings will switch to a 3 p.m. start rather than the previous noon schedule.

### New Coalition Organizing in Western Massachusetts

WendyLeSage, an animal control officer in the Town of Palmer, Hampden County, is interested in starting a Link coalition in her area, which encompasses the region around Springfield. Anyone interested in participating is encouraged to [contact LeSage](#).

## ***BUILDING AWARENESS ABOUT THE LINK***



### **Michigan Humane Society Trains Police on The Link**

The Michigan Humane Society – which was one of the first organizations to create a community Link program back in the 1990s – is training staff at nine area police departments about the correlations between human violence and animal cruelty.

[The Detroit News](#) described the initiative in conjunction with an extensive story about “Baron,” a Rottweiler mix who was severely mutilated by an unknown assailant. Baron’s story went viral and more than \$40,000 in donations from

[Baron at the Humane Society](#) around the world have flooded in to the society to help care for the dog. Veterinarians at Michigan State University were preparing to provide surgical reconstruction of the dog’s nose and tail.

While Baron is the most high-profile animal cruelty case in the region, Pepper noted that the Michigan Humane Society’s investigative team responded to 6,162 calls in 2016, an 11% increase over 2015.

“This is a public safety issue. It’s not just an animal welfare issue,” said Matthew Pepper, President and CEO. “Just by looking at Baron, you can see he has gone through incredible suffering. “Anyone who is capable of doing something like this is capable of doing something like this to a person. This is a dangerous person. We have an obligation to do everything we can to find out who’s responsible.”

### **Link Article Wins Award**

Maureen Blaney Flietner’s article, “Speak Up! How the Reporting of Suspected Animal Abuse Saves Lives of Pets and People” has won its category in the writing competition of the [Dog Writers Association of America \(DWAA\)](#). Flietner, a Wisconsin-based freelance writer, interviewed several national Link authorities for the article which was published in the May 2016 edition of the American Animal Hospital Association’s *Trends* magazine.



“Speak Up!” won in the category for magazine articles dealing with rescue. Contest winners receive the DWAA Maxwell Medallion, named in honor of the late Maxwell Riddle who co-founded the organization. DWAA announced the competition winners at its banquet on Feb. 12 in New York City.

### **National Link Coalition Participates in NCOVAA Meeting**



Several members of the National Link Coalition’s Steering Committee attended the meeting of the National Coalition on Violence Against Animals ([NCOVAA](#)), an independent collective of organizations that focus on animal abuse and its relationship to other forms of violence. At left, Maya Gupta, Phil Arkow, Randy Lockwood, and Mark Kumpf joined more than 20 other attendees at the meeting in Washington, D.C. on Superbowl Sunday. Also attending were John Thompson and Martha Smith-Blackmore.

## *THE LINK... IN THE LEGISLATURES*

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

As state legislatures kick into high gear, the National Link Coalition is encouraged by the increase in the number of violence-prevention bills being introduced that are based on Link principles. Join us as we follow these measures and salute our victories that will do a better job of protecting people and animals – and please let us know of new measures that are introduced in your state.

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



**H.R. 909** and **S.322 – the Pet And Women Safety (PAWS) Act** – was re-introduced with 196 bi-partisan co-sponsors. The PAWS Act would prohibit threats or acts of violence against a victim's pet in interstate stalking and interstate violation of protection orders. It would allocate \$3 million annually through 2021 in grants for shelter and housing assistance for victims with pets, support services to help victims secure safe housing that allows pets, and for pet-related services. Grants could also be used for training on The Link and for identifying best practices. Abusers would be required to make restitution to the victim for costs incurred for veterinary services. **H.R. 909** is in the House Judiciary and Agriculture Committees. **S.322** is in the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry.



**Hawai'i HB 155** would allow either party to order the other to restrain from transferring, encumbering or disposing of pets during divorce, separation or annulment, particularly if one party poses a threat of physical harm to the animal. Courts could order a party to pay for pet support, and consider the animals' well-being and whether future ownership should be individual or joint. The measure was approved by the House Agriculture and has been referred to the Judiciary Committee.



**Indiana SB 314 was merged into SB 323** and would allow a court to grant an order of protection to: (1) award possession and care of an animal to a petitioner; (2) prohibit a respondent from taking action against the animal; and (3) direct a law enforcement officer to accompany the petitioner to retrieve the animal. The bill has passed the Senate and the House Judiciary Committee.



**Michigan HB 4026** would define “causing or attempting to cause physical harm” to a family member's animal as an act of domestic violence in addition to any animal cruelty charges that might pertain. It would allow domestic violence shelters that accept animals to receive state funding and to include veterinary care among the emergency health care services that they provide among the criteria for needing funding. The bill is in the Committee on Law and Justice.



**Nevada** law defines harming an animal to harass a spouse or partner as domestic violence. **SB62** would increase the penalty for this act to a Category B felony if the abuser is convicted of a similar act in Nevada or a similar felony in any other state. The bill is in the Judiciary Committee.



**Texas SB 339** and **HB 142** would create a new offense of illegal sexual contact called “indecent assault” and allow victims to obtain protective orders. Violations of these protective orders would include harming, threatening, or interfering with the care, custody or control of a pet, companion animal or assistance animal belonging to the protected party. **SB 339** is in the Senate Criminal Justice Committee. **HB 142** is in the House Criminal Jurisprudence Committee.



**Rhode Island H5556** would require courts to consider the best interest of the animal in awarding possession of a domestic animal in a divorce or separation proceeding. The bill is in the House Judiciary Committee.

### *Animal Sexual Assault*



**Kentucky 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. Offenders would be barred from owning dogs or cats for 5 years for a first offense, and lifetime for subsequent convictions. The bill is in the Judiciary Committee.



**Kentucky HB 480** would create a new offense of sexual assault against an animal and allow a peace officer to seize an animal if there is probable cause to believe the offense has occurred. Accepted animal husbandry and veterinary medical practices, such as artificial insemination, would be exempted. The bill is in the Judiciary Committee.



**Massachusetts S.805** would amend Mass. Gen. Laws Ann. Ch. 272, § 34, which currently uses the archaic language prohibiting “the abominable and detestable crime against nature either with mankind or with any animal,” to prohibit “a sexual act on an animal, uses an object to sexually abuse an animal, or knowingly permits a sexual act with an animal on any premises under such person’s control.” The bill is in the Joint Committee on the Judiciary.



**Missouri HB 431** would allow persons convicted of having sex with an animal to petition to have their names removed from the state sex offenders registry. The bill passed the House Judiciary Committee and was referred to the Rules & Legislative Oversight Committee.



**Texas HB 1087** would prohibit various sexual acts with animals as bestiality, punishable as a felony. Currently, bestiality in Texas is illegal only if it occurs in conjunction with child pornography or the distribution of obscene material. The bill is in the House Criminal Jurisprudence Committee.



**Vermont H.325** would prohibit sexual contact or fondling between a person and an animal, possessing, advertising or selling an animal for sexual purposes, abetting, observing or participating, and forcing a child under 16 to engage in sexual contact with an animal. It would exempt bona fide veterinary and animal husbandry purposes. The bill is in the House Judiciary Committee.



**West Virginia HB 2664** would add bestiality to the code of crimes against chastity, morality and decency. Individuals who engage in, abet, observe, permit, advertise, or promote bestiality, or induce a child to commit bestiality, would be guilty of a misdemeanor, or a felony upon previous convictions or serious bodily injury or death to the animal. Courts would order offenders to surrender all their animals, prohibit ownership of animals for five or 15 years, and undergo psychiatric or psychological evaluation or counseling. The bill is in the Judiciary Committee.

### *“CASA for Animals”*



**New Jersey A 2041** and its companion **S 433** would allow courts to issue “animal protection orders” forbidding persons convicted of animal cruelty from having contact with the abused animal or other animals as the court may determine, either permanently or for a specified period of time. **A 2041** passed the Assembly and is in the Senate Economic Growth Committee.



**Rhode Island H5061** would require courts to order the appointment of an animal care advocate wherever the custody or well-being of an animal is at issue. The bill is in the House Judiciary Committee.

### *Animal Abuse and Child Maltreatment*



**Michigan HB 4025** would increase the penalties for animal abuse committed in the presence of a child to a misdemeanor punishable by up to one year’s imprisonment, \$2,000 fine, and 300 hours of community service. The bill is in the Committee on Law and Justice.



**New York S1432** and **A5048** criminalize knowingly causing a minor to attend a place where exhibition of animal fighting is being conducted. The bills are in the respective Agriculture Committees.



**New York S2470** and companion bill **A2140**, and **S728** and companion bill **A3845**, would increase penalties for aggravated animal cruelty in the presence of a child. **S2470**, **S728** and **A3845** are in their respective Agriculture Committees and **A2140** is in the Assembly Codes Committee.



**Texas HB 289** would make it a violation to harm or threaten a pet, companion animal or assistance animal belonging to a child under a protection-from-abuse order. The bill is in the House Human Services Committee.

### *Animal Abuse and Elder Abuse*



**Washington HB 1153** and companion bill **SB 5099** would address growing threat of financial exploitation and physical neglect of seniors and people with disabilities by increasing penalties, reducing barriers to prosecution, and expanding the scope of protection for vulnerable persons. 1<sup>st</sup>-degree animal cruelty, including sexual contact with an animal, is listed among many crimes which prosecutors may cite as reasons for filing charges. **HB 1153** was passed by the House on Feb. 27 and sent to the Senate Law & Justice Committee. **SB 5099** was approved by the Senate on March 1 and sent to the House Public Safety Committee.

### *Animal Abuse and Other Crimes*



**California AB 197** would add animal abuse, child abuse, elder and dependent adult abuse, and other crimes to the list of “violent” felonies that could be prosecuted as a 3<sup>rd</sup> strike with additional years of imprisonment under the Three Strikes Law. The bill is in the Committee on Public Safety.



**Indiana SB 306** would increase the penalty from attending an animal fighting contest from a Class A misdemeanor to a Level 6 felony. The bill is in the Committee on Corrections and Criminal Law.



**Kentucky 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 would be barred from owning dogs or cats for 5 years for a first offense, and lifetime for subsequent convictions. The bill is in the Judiciary Committee.



**Massachusetts S.1159** would add the crimes of animal cruelty and fighting as specifically enumerated offenses which would allow the prosecution to ask for pre-trial detention on the grounds of the defendant's dangerousness. The bill would also mandate *Cross-Training*. The bill is in the Committee on Municipal and Regional Government.



**New Jersey A 2738** would expand the criminal and civil acts of animal cruelty to include the theft or release of an animal during the commission of a burglary. The bill is in the Agriculture & Natural Resources Committee.



**New Mexico HJM 6**, a Joint Memorial, requests that the state Departments of Public Safety and Children, Youth & Families consider training on The Link between animal abuse and family violence in their training curricula for field workers and other appropriate staff. The measure passed the House by a vote of 67-0 and has been referred to the Senate Rules Committee.



**New York S1680** and companion bill **A3038** would expand the definition of aggravated cruelty to animals to include harm to animals during the commission of a felony. **S1680** passed the Senate on Jan. 30 and was referred to the Assembly Agriculture Committee; **A3038** is in the Agriculture Committee.



**New York S251** would expand animal fighting prohibitions to criminalize promoting, attending, facilitating, training, breeding or selling fighting animals, or selling, manufacturing or owning animal fighting paraphernalia. The bill is in the Agriculture Committee.



**Oregon HB 2026** would appropriate money from the General Fund to the Department of Justice to fund a position dedicated exclusively to assisting local district attorneys and law enforcement with the prosecution of cases involving the "detriment or risk of detriment" to animals. The bill is in the House Judiciary Committee with subsequent referral to the Ways and Means Committee.



**Rhode Island H5728** would impose further penalties for deliberate or unintentional harming of animals during the commission of any crime. Any sentence imposed would run consecutively to any sentence imposed for the underlying offense. The bill is in the House Judiciary Committee.



**Texas HB 1357** would define as "family violence" coercive, controlling or punishing acts or threats of abuse directed against an animal owned by a member of the household or someone with whom the abuser has had a dating relationship. The bill also makes technical corrections to assist prosecutors in animal cruelty cases. The bill is in the House Criminal Jurisprudence Committee.

## *Cross Reporting*



**Iowa S.F. 129** would require veterinarians who suspect animal abuse, neglect or torture to report the incident to law enforcement agencies with good-faith immunity from civil and criminal liability. Law enforcement officials would be required to file a child endangerment alert report with the Department of Human Services if a minor child witnesses suspected animal abuse, neglect or torture. Courts could, and in some cases would be required to, order psychological or psychiatric evaluation or treatment. The bill creates seven new criminal offenses describing animal abuse, neglect, torture, abandonment, and endangerment. The bill is in the Senate Agriculture Committee.



**Maine LD 157** would require veterinarians who suspect an animal to be the subject of cruelty or neglect to report the case to the Commissioner of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry. Currently, Maine DVMs are permitted to report cruelty or neglect, and are required to report only “aggravated” animal cruelty. The bill is in the Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry Committee.



**Massachusetts S.295** would add domestic violence workers, animal control officers, and humane officers to the list of mandated reporters of suspected child sexual abuse. The bill is in the Education Committee.



**Massachusetts S.1159** would require employees or contractors of the Department of Children & Families, Department of Elder Affairs investigators, and Disabled Persons Protection Commission investigators to report suspected animal abuse. The bill would add animal control officers as mandatory reporters of child abuse, elder abuse and abuse against disabled persons. The bill would also affect *Animal Abuse and Other Crimes*. The bill is in the Committee on Municipal and Regional Government.



**New York S621** and companion bill **A4904** would require veterinarians to report suspected animal cruelty to police, SPCAs, peace officers, district attorney's offices, animal control officers, the department of agriculture and markets, or other appropriate government agencies and to turn over necessary records. New York veterinarians are currently permitted to report but are not required to do so. The bills, sponsored by Sen. Phil Boyle and Assemblywoman Linda Rosenthal, are in the respective Higher Education Committees.



**Rhode Island HR 5392** would require all child protection and domestic violence case workers to report suspected animal abuse to animal control and humane agencies, and animal control and humane officers to report suspected child abuse and domestic violence to child protection and domestic violence agencies. **The measure was held for further study on Mar. 7.**

## *Psychological Evaluation of Offenders*



**Mississippi HB 575** would have defined malicious intent to torture, maim, disfigure, mutilate, burn, suffocate, drown, or starve to death a domesticated dog or cat as felony-level aggravated cruelty and allow up to 10 acts to be considered separate offenses. The bill would have mandated psychological evaluations for offenders. The measure would have mandated police and sheriffs to utilize a form to be devised by the Attorney General, in collaboration with the Mississippi Sheriffs’ Association and the Mississippi Association of Police Chiefs, for reporting all investigations of simple or aggravated cruelty to a dog or cat into the FBI’s National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS). **The bill died in committee on Jan. 31.**



**New Jersey A2367** and **S529**, known as “Shyanne’s Law,” would require mental health evaluation for all animal cruelty offenders, and mental health counseling if warranted by the evaluation. Currently, mental health counseling is mandated only for juvenile offenders. The bills are in the Assembly Agriculture & Natural Resources and Senate Economic Growth Committees.



**New Mexico HB 210** would create a new category of “extreme cruelty to animals” and would require persons convicted of this offense to undergo psychological counseling. The bill is in the House Consumer & Public Affairs Committee.

### *Animal Hoarding*



**New Jersey A3638** would establish animal hoarding as an animal cruelty offense and require mental health evaluation for all animal cruelty offenders. The bill was reported favorably out of the Agriculture & Natural Resources Committee.



**New York A44** would create the crime of companion animal hoarding, defined as ownership, possession or custody of more than 25 companion animals living in conditions likely to jeopardize the health and well-being of the animals and/or people. Offenders would be required to undergo mental health evaluation and may be required to undergo counseling and be prohibited from owning animals. The bill is in the Agriculture Committee.



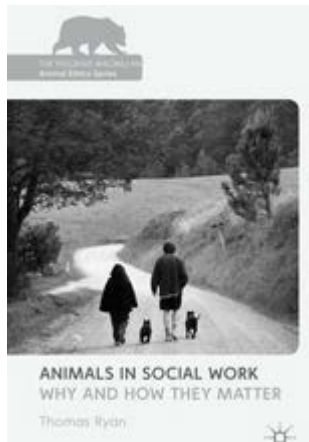
**Rhode Island S390** would define animal hoarding and add it to the list of conduct that is considered cruelty to animals. The bill is in the Senate Judiciary Committee.

## *THE LINK... IN THE LITERATURE*

### **Correlations Between Juvenile Firesetting and Animal Cruelty**

Link research was propelled with the identification in 1963 of the “Macdonald Triad,” purporting to show correlations between early childhood histories of animal cruelty, firesetting and enuresis. In a new review of this issue utilizing a much larger sample, the prevalence of animal cruelty and firesetting was measured among 292,649 juvenile offenders. The prevalence of animal cruelty was 0.59%, accounting for 1,732 young people, and of firesetting 1.56%, or 4,553 persons. (n = 4553). The co-occurrence of these behaviors was rare: 0.17% (498 individuals), but was approximately twice that expected by chance. Rates were higher in males, older youths and Whites. Among historical variables, criminal history was the strongest correlate, followed by mental health problems, then familial and individual indicators. The authors concluded that as only male gender and being a victim of sexual abuse increased the odds of evidencing both animal cruelty and firesetting behavior substantially above the odds for each occurring individually, there appears to be little that is unique to the co-occurrence. They suggest that sensitivity to the occurrence of each when conducting assessments and interventions is the best way forward.

-- Baglivio, M.T., Wolff, K.T., Delisi, M., Vaughn, M.G., & Piquero, A.R. (2016). Juvenile animal cruelty and firesetting behavior. *Criminal Behaviour and Mental Health*. DOI: 10.1002/cbm.2018



## Text Addresses Link Issues in Social Work

The field of social work has traditionally not widely addressed the implications of the human-animal bond, or animal abuse as coercive control, within training curricula; few authoritative resources have been available written from a social work perspective. This compilation of essays in the Palgrave Macmillan Animal Ethics series aims to correct that deficiency and may be the first textbook describing the importance of considering animal welfare within social work.

Deborah Walsh writes about “Domestic violence and animal welfare: The issues, risks and implications for practice.” She explores the link between domestic violence and companion animals by focusing on the debates surrounding the definitions of violence and the evolution of understanding about coercive control in domestic violence as a social problem. The chapter includes a comprehensive literature review and a robust discussion of the impact of coercive control on women and their animals. Lynn Loar encourages social workers to ask questions about the family’s pets: this can greatly inform risk assessments and effective interventions, but is an approach which social workers need to be trained to include in their repertoire. Christine Kim and Emma Newton describe the impact of companion animals on homeless populations, many of whom are survivors of domestic violence.

Other chapters address such issues as expanding the definition of the human psychosocial environment to include the impact of animals and nature on human well-being (Maureen MacNamara & Jeannine Moga); considering animal welfare as a component of trans-species social justice (Atsuko Matsoka et al.); and how the One Health concept bridging human and veterinary medicine is applicable to social work (Cassandra Hanrahan).

-- Walsh, D. (2014). *Domestic violence and animal welfare: The issues, risks and implications for practice*. In, T. Ryan (Ed.). *Animals in Social Work: Why and How they Matter*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 215-228.

-- Loar, L. (2014). “How is Fido?: What the family’s companion animal can tell you about risk assessment and effective interventions – if only you would ask!”. In, T. Ryan (Ed.). *Animals in Social Work: Why and How they Matter*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 135-150.

-- Kim, C.H., & Newton, E.K. (2014). *My dog is my home: Increasing awareness of inter-species homelessness in theory and practice*. In, T. Ryan (Ed.). *Animals in Social Work: Why and How they Matter*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, pp.48-63.

## A Sociological Look at Animal Crimes in Chicago

Several studies have examined rates of animal cruelty and youths’ exposure to dogfighting in Chicago (*See the February 2013 LINK-Letter*). A new study examined the patterns of animal crime in Chicago sociologically. Using Chicago Police Department data, the research analyzed the types of crimes perpetrated, characteristics related to animal crime, and patterns of arrest. Findings indicated that a majority of animal crime was classified as abuse/neglect. High animal crime areas had higher rates of crime, more socioeconomic hardship, and more African-American residents. Animal fighting was more likely to occur in community areas with more socioeconomic hardship. Animal crimes were more likely to result in arrest when they occurred in areas with more hardship.

-- Burchfield, K.B. (2016). *The sociology of animal crime: An examination of incidents and arrests in Chicago*. *Deviant Behavior*, 37(4), 368-384.

## Case Study of Bestiality by an Indian Youth

In what may be the first scholarly look at animal sexual abuse in India, a recent case study examines an 18-year-old male to highlight the importance of psychological assessment and its implications for further risk assessment, family psycho-education and non-pharmacological intervention. The findings portrayed physical and sexual inadequacies, emotional and sexual immaturity, difficulty in emotional attachment, internalized hostility, voyeuristic tendencies, infantile social behavior, and an inability to delay gratification of impulses. The individual was described as an excitement seeker who lacks empathy, has poor self-discipline, and is less sensitive to criticism. The report also emphasized the role of child sexual abuse on sexual behavior in later life. The authors recommended that the topic of bestiality be included within community health/sexual and reproductive health education programs.

-- Sujata, S., Swain, R., Vidhi, P., & Chittaranjan, B. (2016). An adolescent with bestiality behavior: Psychological evaluation and community health concerns. *Indian Journal of Community Medicine*, 41(1), 23-26.

## Parental and Child Reports of Animal Cruelty and Delinquency

This study attempted to determine whether child and parent reports of animal cruelty committed by children correlated with child- and parent-reported delinquency in these same children. The study surveyed 1,778 boys and 1,619 girls, aged 9 years old, and their parents from the Fragile Families and Child Wellbeing sample. The prevalence of animal cruelty as reported by the child (4.7%) and parent (3.0%) were both low. Parent-reported animal cruelty correlated significantly with child-reported delinquency. Child-reported animal cruelty, however, failed to correlate with parent-reported delinquency. The results suggest that parental reports of animal cruelty may be more useful than child reports as indicators of delinquent involvement.

-- Walters, G.D. (2016). Parent and child reports of animal cruelty and their correlations with parent and child reports of child delinquency. *Psychology, Crime & Law*. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/1068316X.2016.1258472>.

## THE LINK... IN THE NEWS

### Rapist Gets 13+ Years in Bestiality and Child Pornography Case

A British rapist was sentenced to 13 years and three months in prison for forcing his dog to also sexually abuse a victim. [Metro](#) reported that James Laity, 34, of Winshill, took videos while he sexually attacked a drunk and semi-conscious woman. He then encouraged his dog, "Warrior," to perform a sex act on the woman, which he also filmed. Laity admitted two charges of rape and five counts of possessing indecent images of children and extreme pornography. The judge said that material found on Laity's phone revealed his interest in sexual abuse. The woman, who was not named, said the incident depressed her to the point where she considered committing suicide.



James Laity

### Multiple Charges Filed in Stabbing Death of Dog

A Lakewood, Ohio couple have been indicted on multiple charges of animal cruelty, endangering a child, domestic violence, weapons offenses, and receiving stolen property after their dog was found stabbed to death. Police responding to a call on Feb. 10 that a woman had been shot at found the dog with multiple stab wounds. Charles Hobbs, 30, and Cassandra Bittulph, 33, claimed the dog had bitten their daughter but police found no evidence of an animal bite, the [Cleveland Plain Dealer](#) reported.

## 45 Cats Rescued from Home of Murdered KKK Wizard

Cat rescue groups in the St. Louis region converged on the crime scene of a murdered KKK leader after more than 45 cats were found in what officials called “appalling” conditions. St. Francois County prosecutors said Frank Ancona, 44, an Imperial Wizard in the Missouri Traditionalist American Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, was shot in his sleep on Feb. 9 in Leadwood, Mo. because he wanted a divorce.



Malissa Ancona & Paul Jinkerson



His wife, Malissa Ann Ancona, and stepson, Paul Edward Jinkerson, Jr., 24, have been charged with his murder, abandonment of a corpse and tampering with physical evidence.

[KMOV-TV](#) reported that Malissa Ancona operated an unlicensed animal rescue. More than a dozen groups were brought in by police to rescue the cats even while evidence from the murder was still inside the home. Jinkerson was also being held on unrelated charges of property damage, attempted stealing, and probation violations from a drug possession case, according to the [St. Louis Post-Dispatch](#).

## Elderly Woman Rescued from Feces-filled Home

A Franklin County, Ky. woman is facing possible neglect charges after animal control officers and sheriff’s deputies, responding to a tip from the Franklin County Humane Society, removed the woman’s elderly mother and her 18 cats and nine dogs from a filthy home. Responders said that the mother was lying on the floor in animal feces and that the smell was so overpowering that they had to wear masks. “I can honestly say the condition of the home was the worst I have seen. The floors and the walls were covered with animal feces,” Deputy Chris Eaton told [Channel LEX18](#). The Department of Social Services is also investigating. Authorities said the animals were in good health.



Roger Lee Miller, Jr.

## Suspect in Fatal Child Abuse Case Charged with Animal Cruelty

Authorities in Montgomery County, Md. belatedly filed four charges of animal cruelty this month against a Rockville man who had earlier been charged with homicide in the death of his infant son. [WJLA-TV](#) reported that police accused Roger Lee Miller, Jr., 20, of savagely shaking his five-month-old son to death last Oct. 28. The child died two days later from severe brain and spinal injuries. After further investigation, Miller was charged with allegedly kicking and punching his 10-week-old puppy, a pit bull named “Milo,” in February 2016. Police found the dog experiencing spasms on a sidewalk when the wind-chill factor was 12 degrees. A necropsy revealed evidence of blunt force trauma and bruising to numerous internal organs. Miller is scheduled for trial in July on the fatal child abuse case, which could result in a life sentence; no trial date has been set yet for the animal cruelty charges. It was not immediately clear why authorities waited so long to file the animal cruelty charges or whether such charges would have prevented Miller from having direct and unsupervised access to his son, the station reported.

## Homicide Investigated at Possible Cockfight

Sheriff's deputies in Stanfield, N. Car., were seeking an unnamed man in conjunction with a homicide that may have occurred during a cockfight. [WBTV](#) reported that officials were looking for a Hispanic male in his 30s or 40s who shot and killed a man after an argument over a cockfight escalated on Feb. 12. Neighbors said this had not been the first shooting at the trailer park where the incident occurred. Stanly County Sheriff's Capt. Brian Hatley identified the victim as Everardo Salazar but downplayed the cockfighting allegation, telling the [Stanly News & Press](#) that there may have been "chicken fighting" previously at the site but at this point law enforcement was concentrating on the homicide aspect of the case.



### *Two Link Cases Stun Detroit*

#### Man Gets Probation for Burning Girlfriend's Dog to Death

A River Rouge, Mich. man who pleaded guilty to setting his girlfriend's dog on fire was sentenced on Feb. 24 to two years of probation. [WDIV-TV](#) reported that David Didlake, 27, had been arrested last Oct. 29 when police found the burned dog near a bottle of accelerant. Didlake had pled guilty to charges of killing and torturing animals, assaulting and resisting a police officer, and being a second-degree habitual offender; an additional charge of abandoning the animal was dismissed as part of a plea bargain.



David Didlake

#### Charges of Cruelty and Home Invasion May Be Re-Introduced

The case against a Trenton, Mich. man who allegedly killed four dogs and broke into his girlfriend's home and was temporarily dropped on March 1 due to a judicial technicality, but Wayne County prosecutors told [WDIV-TV](#) that they plan to re-file the charges. Prosecutors allege that in 2014, Allen Bonds was watching his girlfriend's mother's two dogs "O'Malley" and "Rori," both of whom subsequently died. The family got a new Yorkshire terrier named "Flanigan," who was later found with two broken paws and subsequently killed when his neck was snapped. A fourth dog, "McGee," was beaten but survived the attack. Police said the family's veterinarian began to suspect Bonds. Bonds was arrested in 2016 and charged with home invasion, animal cruelty and torture causing death. The initial case was dropped because there was an issue with discovery.



Allen Bonds

#### Man Shoots Girlfriend, Kills Dog, Then Kills Himself

Volusia County, Fla. Sheriff's deputies are investigating a case in which a man shot his girlfriend, then shot and killed the family dog as three children watched, and then killed himself. The [Daytona Beach News-Journal](#) reported that Candice Hall, 31, had been shot in the stomach by her boyfriend, William Cox, 37. Sheriff Mike Chitwood said that Cox had been pistol-whipping Hall when the family dog attacked him. Cox shot the dog, then turned the gun on Hall and shot her. She was able to take the children and drive off while Cox remained in the house and committed suicide. Hall was expected to recover. Neighbors said the couple had been feuding recently.

## Pet Turtle Killed During Home Invasion Burglary

Police in Baltimore County, Md., arrested one man and were searching for a second suspect in conjunction with a burglary where the homeowner's pet turtle was killed. The [Baltimore Sun](#) reported that Michael Kennard Jones, 23, and Calvin Krasheen Fogg, 24, were accused of breaking into a home in Parkville and stealing two TV sets, gift cards, checks, jewelry, and electronic devices. Police said that [Michael Jones \(left\) and Calvin Fogg](#) before leaving, Jones removed the turtle, named "Donatella," from a terrarium and impaled her on a knife sharpener. Fogg was apprehended on Feb. 17 and police were said to be still looking for Jones, who is also wanted in connection with a previous home invasion robbery with a gun. Jones could be charged with burglary and aggravated cruelty to an animal.



## Man Gets 2-1/2 years for Beating Girlfriend's Dog to Death



[Gregory Fagnoli](#)

An Auburn, Mass. man who beat his girlfriend's dog to death with a broom handle because he said it was keeping him awake at night ([See the December 2015 LINK-Letter](#)) was sentenced on 2-1/2 years in state prison. Gregory Fagnoli pleaded guilty on March 6 to assault, witness intimidation, animal cruelty, and firearms charges in connection with the death of the Catahoula dog named "Polka Dot." National Link Coalition steering committee member Dr. Martha Smith-Blackmore, who performed a forensic necropsy, said the dog had at least 23 rib fractures, 10 broken teeth, a collapsed lung, a brain bleed, and external injuries. Fagnoli was also convicted of strangling his girlfriend, whom he had met online and who had moved from Louisiana to live with him just a few weeks previously, [the Worcester Telegram](#) reported.

## LINK TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

**Mar. 13-17 – Knoxville, Tenn.:** Bethanie Poe, Maya Gupta and Jenny Edwards will present on The Link, bestiality, animal abuse interventions, being an expert witness, and their application to Veterinary Social Work as part of the University of Tennessee's [Veterinary Social Work](#) intensive. The NASW has approved CE contact hours for the Intensive.

**Mar. 14 – Atlanta, Ga.:** The connection of gangs to animal abuse, coordinated community responses to animal abuse, the links between child sex crimes and animal sexual abuse, and strategies for creating animal task forces are just a few of the many topics to be presented at the State Bar of Georgia/Animal Law Source [Animal Law & Enforcement/Animal Shelter Symposium](#).

**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. 19 – Estevan, Sask., Canada:** Dennis Will, Anne Allen, and Kaley Pugh will discuss animal abuse as a reliable indicator of domestic violence in humans, the parallel evolution of child and animal protection laws, and challenges for veterinary professionals in reporting suspected cruelty and neglect as part of the Saskatchewan VMA's [Conversation About Animal Welfare in Saskatchewan](#).

**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. 29: West Palm Beach, Fla.:** The [South Florida Link Coalition](#) will meet.

**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 1 – Annapolis, Md.:** Lisa Lunghofer will discuss animals as protective factors for youth, how animal abuse affects children, and trauma-focused strategies for intervening with children who have abused or witnessed animal abuse at the [Maryland CASA](#) annual 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](#).

**April 7 – Austin, Texas:** Genie Wright and Susan Skinner will present on “The Link Between Animal Cruelty and Domestic Violence,” and other speakers will present on veterinary forensics and animal cruelty investigation and prosecution, at the [2017 Animal Law Institute](#) of the Texas Bar Association’s Animal Law Section.

**April 8 – Birmingham, UK:** Paula Boyden will present on “What Drives Abuse?” and Vicki Betton and Wendy Sneddon will present on “Abuse: Increasing Vigilance” at the British Small Animal Veterinary Association [Congress 2017](#).

**April 9-11 – Ottawa, Ont., Canada:** Barbara Cartwright will present on “Beyond the Violence Link: Connecting Our Collective Vulnerability to Build a Humane Canada,” and Ayala Sher and Dayna Desmarais will present on “Companion Animal Fostering for Those Fleeing Domestic Violence: When a Community Comes Together,” at the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary [Canadian Federation of Humane Societies](#) conference.

**April 9 – Yorkton, Sask., Canada:** Dennis Will, Anne Allen, and Kaley Pugh will discuss animal abuse as a reliable indicator of domestic violence in humans, the parallel evolution of child and animal protection laws, and challenges for veterinary professionals in reporting suspected cruelty and neglect as part of the Saskatchewan VMA’s [Conversation About Animal Welfare in Saskatchewan](#).

**April 12 – Pittsfield, Mass.:** [HAVEN](#) (Human/Animal Violence Education Network) will meet.

**April 18 – Bowling Green, Ky.:** Allie Phillips will give a keynote address on “The Co-Occurrence of Animal Abuse and Family Violence,” and a workshop on “Therapy Animals Supporting Maltreated Children in the Criminal Justice System,” at the [Spring Conference](#) for the Community Collaborations for Children Regional Network.

**April 19 – Ann Arbor, Mich.:** Lisa Lunghofer will present on animal abuse, interpersonal violence and antisocial behavior, and on children and animal abuse, at a day-long training at the [Humane Society of Huron Valley](#).

**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 16-18 – New York City, N.Y.:** The 10<sup>th</sup> Annual [International Veterinary Forensic Sciences Association](#) conference, sponsored by ASPCA, will feature 21 sessions addressing such topics as: domestic violence and animal cruelty; law enforcement and intervention alternatives; multidisciplinary approaches to investigating animal crimes; cruelty offender assessment; human medicine’s experiences in recognizing and reporting non-accidental injury; and the role of veterinary nurses in animal abuse situations.

**May 22 – Dallas, Texas:** Maya Gupta and Kelsey McKay will present on “Animals and Domestic Violence: Another Tool of Manipulation” at the [Conference on Crimes Against Women](#).

**June 1 – Tedford, Shropshire, UK:** [Paula Boyden](#), Freda Scott-Park, and Phil Wilson will discuss The Link in an all-day training for veterinarians.

**June 2 – Dallas, Texas:** Animal hoarding will be discussed at the [Hoarding Conference](#) sponsored by Mental Health America of Greater Dallas.

**June 8-9 – Flagstaff, Ariz.:** Diana Webster and Christina Schwamberger will discuss The Link at the [Navajo Nation Bar Association](#) Annual Conference.

**June 24 – Reno, Nev.:** The [National Coalition on Violence Against Animals](#) will meet in conjunction with the National Sheriffs’ Association Annual Conference.

**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.”

**Aug. 3 – Blairsville, Ga.:** Phil Arkow will train on “The Cruelty Connection: Animal Abuse’s Links with Domestic Violence,” for [Support in Abusive Family Emergencies](#) (S.A.F.E.)

**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 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration of [Pet Partners](#).

**Sept. 18-19: Albuquerque, N. Mex.:** “Positive Links,” [The New Mexico Conference on The Link](#), will hold its biennial conference featuring many national and regional speakers on a variety of Link-related topics. For the first time since the conference started in 2003 it will be a two-day event to allow more time for training and networking.

**Sept. 21-22 – Regina, Sask., Canada:** Randy Lockwood will be the keynote speaker at the Saskatchewan SPCA’s [2017 Link Conference](#).

**Oct. 26 – Bartlett, N.H.:** Phil Arkow and Jerilee Zezula will present on “The Cruelty Connection” at the [New Hampshire Attorney General’s Annual Conference](#).

**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](mailto: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.

### Members of the National Link Coalition Steering Committee

#### Phil Arkow, Coordinator

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

#### Lesley Ashworth

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

#### Diane Balkin, J.D.

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

#### Barbara W. Boat, Ph.D.

Associate Professor, Univ. of Cincinnati College of Medicine  
Exec. Director, Childhood Trust, Cincinnati Children's Hospital  
Cincinnati, Ohio

#### Cym Doggett, LCSW

Project Director, Southern Regional CAC,  
National Children's Advocacy Center  
Huntsville, Ala.

#### Maya Gupta, Ph.D.

Senior Director of Applied Research,  
ASPCA Research & Development Division  
Atlanta, Ga.

#### Jane A. Hunt

Coordinator, Community Health Improvement Plan  
Larimer County Department of Health  
Ft. Collins, Colo.

#### Mark Kumpf, CAWA

Past President, National Animal Control Association  
Director, Montgomery County Animal Resource Center  
Dayton, Ohio

#### Randall Lockwood, Ph.D.

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

#### Natalie Martinez

Programs Manager  
National Coalition Against Domestic Violence  
Denver, Colo.

#### Paul Needham

Chair, Education Committee,  
National Adult Protective Services Association  
Shawnee, Okla.

#### Maria Luisa O'Neill

Account Representative, Wages & Investments  
U.S. Department of the Treasury,  
Internal Revenue Service  
Denver, Colo.

#### Emily Patterson-Kane, Ph.D.

Animal Welfare Scientist, Animal Welfare Division  
American Veterinary Medical Association  
Schaumburg, Ill.

#### Allie Phillips, J.D.

Director, Sheltering Animals and Families Together (SAF-T)  
Lansing, Mich.

#### Gale Rasin, J.D.

Retired Associate Judge, Baltimore City Circuit Court,  
Chestertown, Md.

#### Chris Risley-Curtiss, MSSW, Ph.D.

Associate Professor *Emerita*,  
Arizona State University School of Social Work  
Gaston, S. Car.

#### Martha Smith-Blackmore, DVM

President, Forensic Veterinary Investigations, LLC  
Boston, Mass.

#### Hugh Tebault III

President,  
The Latham Foundation  
Alameda, Calif.

#### John Thompson

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