



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

[Phil Arkow](#), Coordinator and Editor

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## National Directory of Abuse Investigation Agencies Published

The National Link Coalition has published the first **National Directory of Abuse Investigation Agencies**, listing which agencies investigate reports of animal, child and elder abuse and domestic violence in 6,513 counties, cities and towns.

The Directory was created because 37 states now require or permit veterinarians, child protection and adult protective services workers to report suspected animal cruelty. But because of the lack of uniform systems for investigating such reports, and incomplete information on many shelters' websites, many people are confused about whom to call in their community.

### WHAT ANIMAL CARE AND CONTROL AGENCIES SHOULD DO ON THEIR WEBSITES AND FACEBOOK

- **If you investigate animal abuse, say so!**
- **If you don't, use the Directory to find out who does in your service area. Tell your viewers who to call and publish the phone numbers.**
- **Publish signs of animal abuse and neglect and information callers will need to provide.**
- **Cite the Link as the reason why they should report child, elder and domestic abuse, and use the Directory to publish your state's hotlines.**
- **Link your web pages to the Directory for your state at <http://NationalLinkCoalition.org/how-do-i-report-suspected-abuse> .**
- **National Link Coalition speakers can provide training at your state conferences on how animal abuse is Linked to human violence.**
- **Please let us know if any listings need changing.**

The free Directory closes this information gap online at <http://NationalLinkCoalition.org/how-do-i-report-suspected-abuse> . An interactive map lists the names and phone numbers of 6,513 animal cruelty investigating agencies organized by county and city within each state. The goal is to eliminate confusion and make it easier for the public to report animal abuse.

"Trying to report an abused animal often results in a bureaucratic runaround," said Phil Arkow, National Link Coalition Coordinator. "A caller to an animal control or humane agency may be told to call law enforcement; the police or sheriff may say they are not trained in animal welfare issues and to call

animal control. The result is a caller who gives up in frustration and animal abuse that goes unresolved. Our goal is for people to use the Directory to cut through the confusion.”

Because animal abuse is a “red flag” that often indicates other family violence, the Directory also includes each state’s hotlines to report suspected child abuse, elder abuse and domestic violence. Animal care and control officers are mandated reporters of child or elder abuse in 29 states.

## **Simplifying the Complexity of Animal Care and Control**

Compiling the Directory was a year-long project. “One of the immediate things we confirmed is the complexity of the animal abuse reporting process, especially as compared to the simplicity of the single state hotlines for child, domestic and elder abuse,” he said.

Animal welfare complaints are investigated locally with no consistent system. Depending on the jurisdiction, reports may be handled by a humane society, SPCA, animal control/services, police, sheriff, or other agency. Not all agencies have sworn officers empowered to charge misdemeanors or felonies. Some are species-specific and may not be allowed to investigate cases involving cats or livestock.

Nationwide, 47% of the investigating agencies are animal control or animal services; 46% are police or sheriffs; and 7% are humane societies and SPCAs. But there are significant regional differences and in most states the responsibility is divided up inconsistently among the different sectors.

“This fragmented patchwork quilt is not user-friendly. Relatively few animal shelter websites say if they investigate cruelty, or if not which specific phone numbers in their service area to call,” he said.

Meanwhile, the public often mistakenly believes local humane societies or SPCAs to be branches of national organizations. Each shelter is actually independent with its own policies, programs and enforcement powers which range from full to partial to none.

## **An Increased Need**

The need for the Directory has increased in recent years with veterinarians now more proactive in reporting animal abuse, much as physicians respond to child maltreatment. This is a result of: AVMA and AAHA policy statements; state laws shielding practitioners from civil and criminal liability; diagnostic and forensic tools to identify non-accidental injury; and practice management guidelines. “Practitioners kept telling us they wanted to report but did not know who to call,” Arkow said.

The need was further enhanced by the FBI’s including four types of animal cruelty in its National Incident-Based Reporting System. Investigators outside law enforcement agencies will have to establish Memorandums of Understanding with police and sheriffs to enter their cases into national statistics.

The Directory cautions that in many areas lacking empowered animal shelters, cruelty investigations default to the police and sheriff where enforcement may not be vigorous. Whether law enforcement prioritizes a response or has sufficient training to investigate these cases is debatable, particularly in rural and smaller communities. “But animal cruelty is a crime like any other they are mandated to investigate, and law enforcement officers need to know this,” he said.

The Directory will be a work-in-progress and will be updated regularly. Please contact the National Link Coalition at [arkowpets@snip.net](mailto:arkowpets@snip.net) to report edits to the listings.

## ***ANIMAL ABUSE AND... DOMESTIC VIOLENCE***

### **RedRover Increases Co-Sheltering Grants to \$20,000**

Thanks to a generous grant from an anonymous foundation, Red Rover will be able to award grants of up to \$20,000 to domestic violence shelters that wish to build facilities to enable families escaping domestic violence to bring their pets with them.

The Safe Housing grants enable domestic violence shelters to create space for pets to live on-site with their families in places where that option was previously unavailable. 58 grants, totaling more than \$235,000, have been awarded since the program was initiated in 2012. In previous years, grants were limited to \$3,000, then \$6,000; the new \$20,000 limit represents a major increase in available funding to help shelters with capital construction costs.



Grants may be awarded to shelters anywhere in the U.S., although priority will be given to shelters in Connecticut, Delaware, Hawai'i, Maine, Mississippi, Nebraska, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and West Virginia, the only states currently lacking at least one pet-friendly shelter.

**Katie Campbell explains the expanded RedRover grant program**

Providing pet co-sheltering facilities in safe houses eliminates a significant barrier to the family's safety, keeps survivors safe while they go through the prosecution process, enhances the human animal bond, provides continuity for children going through traumatic changes, and helps end the cycle of violence, said RedRover Outreach and Partnership Coordinator Katie Campbell. "We need to get the message out to domestic violence shelters that co-sheltering rocks!" she said.

The next deadline for Safe Housing grants is May 15. Grant application information is available on the [RedRover website](#).

RedRover also offers smaller Safe Escape grants to individuals fleeing domestic abuse. These grants help pay for pet boarding costs while the rest of the family is in a domestic violence shelter.

### **Video Tells Woman & Dog's Incredible Story of Survival**

The need for domestic violence shelter to accommodate all members of the home – including the four-legged, furry friends we call family – becomes even more compelling when first-person accounts from survivors describe how their animals provided solace and even saved their lives. One such account is available in a video from the Rose Brooks Center in Kansas City, which pioneered SAF-T (Sheltering Animals and Families Together) co-sheltering in 2012 (*See the [July 2012 LINK-Letter](#)*).



The [five-minute video](#) is narrated by a survivor whose 110-pound Great Dane saved her life during her abuser's attack. The unnamed woman praises the Rose Brooks staff for admitting her and her dog. "When you're not ready to cry, they will make you laugh. When you can't sleep because it's scarier to be asleep than it is to be awake, they will stay up with you. They care about you when I didn't feel like I was worth being cared about," she says. "I would not be sitting here if they had not admitted me."



**Deborah Glick**

## New York State Bill Would Award Pet Custody in Divorce or Separation Cases

New York State has joined the small but growing list of jurisdictions considering legislation that would require courts to include animals' welfare and best interests when awarding custody in divorce cases. Modeled after long-standing practices in child custody hearings, **A8663** would amend §23 of the state's Domestic Relations Law to require the court to consider the best interest of a companion animal when awarding possession in a divorce or separation proceeding.

The measure was introduced by Assemblywoman Deborah Glick and has 15 co-sponsors. It was assigned to the Assembly Judiciary Committee.

The concept of pet custody proceedings was pioneered last year by Alaska ([See the November 2016 LINK-Letter](#)) and replicated by Illinois ([See the September 2017 LINK-Letter](#)). A similar bill is pending in Pennsylvania. Hawai'i and Rhode Island introduced similar legislation which failed to pass.

## Women's Resource Center in Norman, Okla. Becomes Pet-Friendly



**Kennels at the Women's Resource Center will shelter the animal survivors of intimate partner violence**

Norman, Oklahoma has joined the growing list of over 100 American communities – plus several others in Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and the Netherlands, with domestic violence shelters that can accommodate pets in order to ease the barriers for families fleeing their abusers.

After the [Women's Resource Center](#) determined that 43 women were unable to enter their emergency shelter last year because their pets would not be welcome, the shelter began modifying its facilities. On Nov. 20, a small kenneling area was opened that will allow sanctuary for dogs and cats.

"We are extremely excited to offer this service," Center Executive Director Kristy Stewart told the [Norman Transcript](#). "Family pets are exactly that – family. If you are escaping a dangerous situation, the last thing you want to do is leave a family member behind."

Citing the Link and the National Link Coalition, Center leaders reported that a grant from the Wilshire Foundation enabled them to install new fencing, turf, kennels, and housing units for pets. The Oklahoma City Pet Food Pantry will provide donated food and pet supplies as needed.

The Center plans to conduct a statewide survey of Oklahoma's 30 domestic violence shelters to determine how widespread in the state is the issue of women needing co-sheltering for their pets. Currently, [SAF-T](#) (Sheltering Animals and Families Together) facilities are available only in Tulsa, with a third program planned in Claremore.

## Michigan Bill Would Punish Intimidating Cruelty

A bill working its way through the Michigan legislature would make it a first, second or third-degree offense, depending on severity and the number of animals involved, to knowingly torture or kill an animal with the intent to cause mental distress or exert control over a person. **Michigan HB 4332** passed the House on Nov. 29 by a vote of 90-15 and was sent to the Senate.



“Pets are a crucial part of many Michigan families, often like children and close friends, State Rep. Tommy Brann told [WXYZ-TV](#). “Anyone willing to injure or torture a family pet with the goal of manipulating someone is probably not going to stop there. It could be a child or a parent next. Besides seeking protection of our family pets, we’re also going to stop this sadistic behavior before it becomes even worse.” **Rep. Tommy Brann**

The measure is supported by the Wayne County Prosecutor’s Office, the Michigan Coalition to End Domestic and Sexual Violence, and the Michigan Humane Society. A companion measure, **HB 4333**, would update sentencing guidelines for animal cruelty charges to up to 10 years imprisonment.

Nine states have laws in which an act of animal abuse intended to terrorize or control a spouse or partner may be prosecuted as domestic violence or elder abuse as well as animal cruelty: Alaska, Arizona, Colorado, Indiana, Maine, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, and Tennessee. Arkansas includes harming of a spouse’s pet within its definition of emotional abuse. Minnesota imposes double penalties for felony animal cruelty that threatens, intimidates or terrorizes another person.

## *THE LINK AND... CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT*

### Sniffer-Dog the Latest Weapon in Fight Against Child Pornography



**Charlie is trained to sniff out devices that may contain child porn** [Inquirer](#) reported her to be the first of her kind in the state and one of only about two dozen similar dogs nationwide.

A specially trained dog has been designated a new weapon in the war against child victimization and child exploitation due to her unique ability to sniff out small hidden electronics, from CD-ROMs to flash drives, that may contain child pornography in the homes of suspected child sex abuse predators.

“Charlie,” a two-year-old Labrador retriever, is an “electronic-detection forensic K-9” deployed with the Internet Crimes Against Children Pennsylvania Task Force. She made her debut at the Delaware County, Pa. courthouse, where the [Philadelphia](#)

The dogs are trained in Ohio by Azzi International Service for Dogs to detect a specific chemical found in all electronics. The Department of Homeland Security paid for her training and deployment.

Charlie also doubles as a family pet for her handler Nat Evans, a forensic analyst with the Delaware County Criminal Investigation Division. Evans said Charlie is therapeutic for him as well, giving him a break from the dark work of finding child predators.

## ***THE LINK AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE***

### **Animal Cruelty Task Force Launches Jail Diversion Program**

Syracuse's Central New York Animal Cruelty Task Force has launched a new jail diversion program that aims to rehabilitate animal abusers. Designed by the [Animals and Society Institute](#), the curriculum is for adults who have been arrested for animal cruelty or neglect. Over the course of 16 meetings held once per week, offenders will address and change their behavior toward animals. Sixteen people are enrolled in the inaugural program, according to [Task Force Facilitator](#) Nicole Heath.



Research has shown that the mistreatment of animals is a “gateway” to other violent crimes like child and elder abuse or domestic violence. Heath told news media that this program could help in addressing those behaviors early on.

“If we can look at this now and look at the same kind of things ... they need to be taught about accountability, about changing beliefs toward animals, also anger management, stress management ... All of those topics are going to be things that would be covered throughout these sessions,” she said.

“By promoting an intervention program that provides treatment and education to those convicted of animal cruelty, we may be able to better prevent animal abuse as well as other crimes,” she said.

The diversion program is funded through a grant from the Gifford Foundation. The Task Force is working with the Onondaga County District Attorney's Office and the Probation Office.

The Task Force has previously helped to create an “Animal Court” in Syracuse where one judge, one prosecutor and one probation officer handle animal cruelty crimes each month. The Task Force also established a Volunteer Advocate Lawyer program for the Animal Court, where local attorneys act as advocates on behalf of animal victims (*see the [December 2016 LINK-Letter](#)*).

“Our hope is that those arrested or convicted for animal cruelty-related crimes will become more accountable for their actions, increase their knowledge of animal care and well-being, change attitudes and beliefs that support animal abuse, improve interpersonal skills, and, ultimately, decrease recidivism,” she said.

### **Proposed Bill Would Ban Illinois Animal Abusers from Owning Guns**

Citing evidence that acts of animal abuse often escalate into interpersonal violence, the [Illinois State Crime Commission](#) is planning to go head-to-head against the NRA with a bill in 2018 that would ban convicted animal abusers from owning guns.



The bill, modeled after similar legislation restricting gun ownership to those convicted of domestic battery, would be the first of its kind in the nation, said Jerry Elsner, Executive Director of the Commission.

Elsner told [KMOX](#) in St. Louis that under his proposal, those convicted of abusing an animal would be denied a Firearm Owners ID card or have their current license revoked. He said that despite any backlash from the NRA and defenders of the Second Amendment, if such a law saved even one life it would be worth the effort.

## Police Publication Explores Domestic Violence/Animal Abuse Link

The unique partnership between the ASPCA and the NYPD (*See the [September 2013 LINK-Letter](#)*), in which animal cruelty investigations are now turned over to 34,000 of New York's finest law enforcement officers, is leading to a significant increase in the number of Link cases, thanks to a protocol in which ASPCA veterinarians regularly examine and document injuries to animals that have been hurt or killed in connection with acts of domestic violence.

Writing in [PoliceOne.com](#), a website reaching thousands of law enforcement officers, Randy Lockwood reported that the ASPCA has documented 65 cases of animal cruelty related to domestic violence in the past three years. The cases have involved 78 animals, 25 of which were deceased, and 82% of the cases were perpetrated by spouses or significant others (*See the [June 2017 LINK-Letter](#)*).



**ASPCA medical staff examine a dog**

Lockwood, Senior Vice President for Forensic Sciences and Anti-Cruelty Projects and a member of the National Link Coalition's steering committee, described the elements of jealousy, power and control that often cause abusers to target pets in domestic violence situations.

“Law enforcement officers should be alert to the seriousness of threats or harm to companion animals in the context of domestic violence,” he wrote. “Killing or injuring an animal in front of a child to threaten or intimidate someone can be considered a serious offense, in addition to any animal cruelty charges. When responding to a call regarding domestic violence, police officers should ask if there are any pets in the home and make note of any animals with signs of injury.”

He described ASPCA resources for law enforcement, including trainings, safety net programs and veterinary services for the animal victims of domestic violence, and facilitation of community task forces and Link coalitions.

“Animals are part of the family in the majority of American households and often animal cruelty is a form of family violence,” he noted. “Being aware of and responding to such abuse can help save people and animals from harm.”

### *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)

## ***THE LINK AND... VETERINARY MEDICINE***

### **Domestic Violence Comfort Dog Program to Reach Out to Veterinarians**

Thanks to a \$30,000 grant from Verizon Wireless in honor of Domestic Violence Awareness Month, a pioneering program in Pittsburgh, Pa. that brings support dogs into courtrooms to help abuse victims testify will create coalitions of veterinarians' offices to provide training and to promote referrals, intervention, and awareness of domestic violence victims' rights.

Paws for Empowerment, a program of [Crisis Center North](#), has paired area domestic violence survivors with canine advocates for comfort in counseling sessions and in the courtroom since 2010 (*See the [September 2013 LINK-Letter](#)*).



**“Ari” (left) and “Penny” (looking stylish)**

[Pittsburgh Veterinary Specialty & Emergency Center](#) “has transcended the realm of veterinary medicine by not just caring for the animals, but by coming to care for the humans who love those animals,” said Lori C. Harbert, Director of Social Work Services. Harbert told the [Pittsburgh Tribune-Review](#) that she has seen three or four cases where domestic and animal abuse coincided.

Crisis Center North, a nonprofit counseling, referral and educational resource center for families experiencing domestic violence, has two comfort dogs named “Penny” and, more recently, canine trainee “Ari.” “Penny’s presence has made a noted difference in the quality of testimony for both adult and child victims of domestic violence,” said Magisterial District Judge Anthony Saveikis. “Penny’s intuitive and gentle nature are comforting to victims as they testify and navigate the legal system.”

“The thought of Penny being there, waiting for me, gave me the strength to keep coming in for help,” said an anonymous CCN client. “Penny wouldn’t let me just slip back in denial and abuse, and without her I would not have made the same level of personal progress I have.”

### **Blog Addresses Animal Violence in Veterinary Social Work Settings**

In honor of October as Domestic Violence Awareness Month, Sandra Brackenridge composed a [blog](#) to help encourage people to recognize that acts of domestic violence may also include animal violence. Brackenridge, a former associate professor of social work at Texas Women’s University and an ardent proponent of Veterinary Social Work, noted that fears about their companion animals can be a barrier for domestic violence victims in seeking treatment, and that coercive animal abuse is often used by perpetrators to hurt victims further.



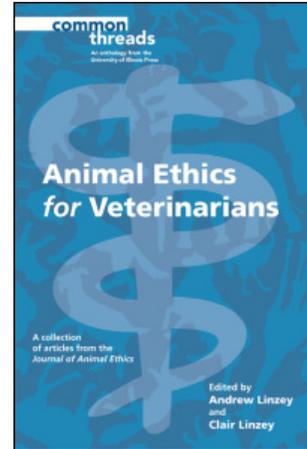
**Sandra Brackenridge and friend**

Brackenridge described a recent case of animal violence where many community agencies rallied together for a family whose father had a sudden and violent episode with a beloved family pet. From animal control to child protective services, Veterinary Social Work was the connecting bridge to address the family's needs. Her call to action was that “once is enough”.

## Veterinary Ethics Anthology Explores The Link

The literature on veterinary ethics has expanded with an encouraging development that includes the issue of cruelty to companion animals.

*Animal Ethics for Veterinarians* is an anthology of 14 articles from the *Journal of Animal Ethics*. Edited by Andrew and Clair Linzey and published by the University of Illinois Press, the book offers a multi-national primer on key ethical issues including veterinary oaths, animal cognition, complementary and alternative veterinary medicine, and cruelty to animals.



Two chapters by Eleonora Gullone address animal cruelty and its impact on interpersonal violence. Gullone conducts an extensive, evaluative review of the violence graduation hypothesis and the deviance generalization hypothesis to explain the etiology of animal cruelty and its links to human aggression, violence and antisocial behavior. She examines the strengths and limitations of each hypothesis within four themes:

- Animal abuse within conduct disorder, antisocial personality disorder and psychopathy
- Co-occurrence between animal cruelty and other criminal behaviors
- Co-occurrence between animal cruelty and family violence
- Links between animal cruelty and bullying and the witnessing of interpersonal aggression

Regardless of which hypothesis is used, “the findings of the animal cruelty research are overwhelmingly consistent with findings from the extensive and solid evidence provided by the broader aggression and antisocial behavior literature,” she concludes. “Its early identification provides an optimal opportunity for engaging preventative strategies. As such it is of significant importance for health care professionals.”

Her second chapter builds upon the research showing that animal cruelty shares many of the same pathways and risk factors shown for other aggressive behaviors. Gullone explores numerous risk factors for cruelty to animals including histories of child abuse, domestic violence, gender, age, familial and cultural environments, witnessing violence, temperamental predisposition, displaced aggression, low empathy, and poor emotional regulation. Again, she emphasizes that early detection and intervention will be helpful to humans and other animals.

-- Linzey, A., & Linzey, C. (Eds.) (2017). *Animal Ethics for Veterinarians*. Champaign: University of Illinois Press.

-- Gullone, E. (2017). An evaluative review of theories related to animal cruelty. In, A. Linzey & C. Linzey (Eds.). *Animal Ethics for Veterinarians*. Champaign: University of Illinois Press, pp. 90-115.

-- Gullone, E. (2017). Risk factors for the development of animal cruelty. In, A. Linzey & C. Linzey (Eds.). *Animal Ethics for Veterinarians*. Champaign: University of Illinois Press, pp. 116-138.

## Brazilian Veterinary Forensics Textbook Includes The Link

A stunning new textbook published in Brazil expands the frontiers of veterinary forensic medicine into the Portuguese-speaking world. *Tratado de Medicina Veterinária Legal* features 20 highly informative chapters authored by world-renowned experts in their field.

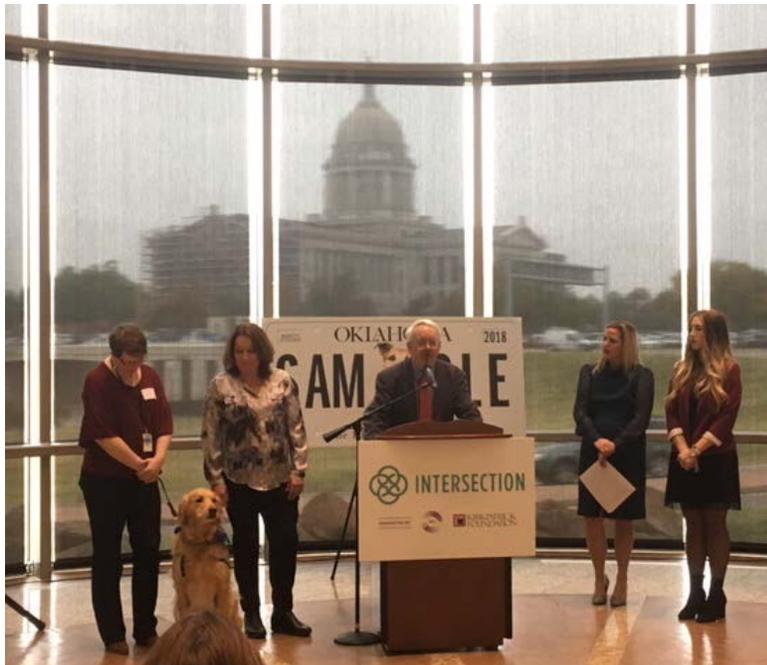
Published by Medvep, the book is edited by Raimundo Alberto Tostes, Sérgio Túlio Reis and Valdecir Vargas Castilho. National Link Coalition Coordinator Phil Arkow authored the chapter on “Maus-tratos a animais no contexto de outra violência familiar” (Mistreatment of animals in the context of other family violence). Veterinary forensics authors John and Margaret Cooper contributed a chapter on the history of veterinary forensic medicine. Rita de Cassis Maria Garcia contributed a chapter on coping with the challenges of animal neglect.



The book addresses crimes against domesticated and wild animals, forensic entomology, pathology and crime scene investigation. Each chapter is richly illustrated with diagrams and color photographs. Full references complete each chapter.

## NEWS FROM LOCAL LINK COALITIONS

### Oklahoma Link Coalition Holds “Intersection” Conference



With the majestic Oklahoma State Capitol as a backdrop, Randy Lockwood (center) and several human and canine friends held a press conference at the Oklahoma Link Coalition’s [Annual Conference](#) appropriately called “Intersection.” The conference, sponsored by the Kirkpatrick Foundation, was a gathering for professionals in social services, law enforcement, animal wellbeing, child protection, elder care, and the legal field. Participants learned how interdisciplinary collaboration across a wide variety of fields can improve life for people and animals across the Sooner State by addressing the parallel forms of abuse.

The conference also unveiled the new Oklahoma animal-friendly license plate. A [20-minute video](#) including Randy’s keynote address from the conference has been posted on Facebook.



## Aurora Link Coalition Re-establishing

A multidisciplinary task force in Aurora, Colo. is attempting to revitalize the Aurora Link Coalition that was one of the earliest such community coalitions but which fell apart several years ago. Spearheaded by [Jenee Shipman](#), Manager of Aurora Animal Services, and Deputy City Attorney

Julie Heckman, an inaugural steering committee convened on Oct. 26 to begin the process of re-establishing the coalition. A second meeting was held on Dec. 1. National Link Coalition members Diane Balkin and Phil Arkow are assisting the group through its initial stages.

Initial participants include Gateway Battered Women’s Services, victim/witness services, neighborhood services, the University of Colorado – Denver, and a division of the police department. A preliminary three-year strategic plan has been developed which includes identifying relevant stakeholders, creating a resource guide of organizations, and developing a succession plan to ensure sustainability. The coalition hopes to establish itself as a statewide model for other Link coalitions by developing training programs and supporting public policy that protects people and animals.

## Swedish Link Coalition Making Great Progress



Our Swedish Link affiliate, Se Sambandet, is having an exciting year with many new projects in the works. Coordinator Carin Holmberg tells *The LINK-Letter* that the group’s [website](#) has a new home page which is spreading the Link message in Sweden. The coalition received funding for a special project to educate veterinarians about The Link, which will include writing a manual, presenting lectures, and writing plans to help veterinary clinics implement Link responses.

The group will distribute a new brochure about The Link between violence against children and companion animals. They are seeking funding for a similar brochure about animal abuse’s ties to violence against elders.

## ***BUILDING LINK AWARENESS***



## Dutch Conference Explores Sheltering Pets of Domestic Violence Survivors

Allie Phillips, Marie-Jose Enders-Slegers, and Arien van der Heijden were among the featured presenters at the International Fund for Animal Welfare conference in Amsterdam. Phillips presented on Sheltering Animals and Families Together (SAF-T), which is about to open the first co-sheltering program for domestic violence survivors in the Netherlands. Van der Heijden, director of IFAW Netherlands, described the Blijf van mijn Dier program which offers temporary shelter for domestic survivors’ pets with host families. Some 80 domestic violence and animal protection professionals and survivors attended.

## Baltimore Animal Abuse Summit Addresses The Link



Over 125 professionals from Maryland came together on Nov. 3 at the 5<sup>th</sup> annual Animal Abuse Leadership Summit, organized by the Baltimore County State’s Attorney’s Animal Abuse Unit to foster interdisciplinary education and connection.

Caroline Griffin and Sande Riesett (*above*) described the “Show Your Soft Side” advertising campaign ([See the October 2016 LINK-Letter](#)) that enlists tough-guy figures from sports, law enforcement and the military with their pets, noting that “Only a punk would hurt a cat or dog.” The campaign, started in Baltimore six years ago, has gone international with posters and billboards helping thousands of youths each week to understand that you can still be tough if you’re kind to animals.



Gillian Deegan (*left*), Assistant Commonwealth’s Attorney for Botetourt County, Va., presented an overview of The Link with case studies from cases she prosecuted. Adam Lippe (*below*), chief of the Animal Abuse Unit, described how the criminal justice system is slowly coming to recognize animals as members of the family rather than as just property.

Other presenters included Emily Hovermale, Maryland State Director for HSUS, who announced plans to push for legislation in Annapolis in 2018 that would update the state’s bestiality statutes and that would reclassify felony-level animal cruelty as a “crime of violence.” National Link Coalition Coordinator Phil Arkow reviewed the National Directory of Animal, Child, Domestic, and Elder Abuse Investigating Agencies and encouraged agencies to update their websites to make it easier for the public to report all forms of family violence.

## Link Information Disseminated in Japan

Information about how animal abuse is often linked to interpersonal violence is being disseminated in Japan through a new endeavor called Animal Literacy that aims to separate fact from misinformation and present objective information about human-animal interactions. Founders Keiko and Sakiko Yamazaki launched the Animal Literacy Research Institute in November with the aim of countering a human tendency to take positions on animal issues based on half-truths.



**Keiko and Sakiko Yamazaki**

social work, animal-assisted interventions, animal welfare, and other topics. The Institute also offers translation, interpreting and training services.

“People working in the animal field tend to stress their own views. Animal literacy is knowing the actual facts,” they write. “Hopefully, more people in the world will look towards becoming more and more ‘literate’ in the field of human-animal interrelations.”

The Animal Literacy [website](#), presented mainly in Japanese but with some English pages, includes articles on [the Link](#), veterinary



## “Le Lien” is The Link in France

Awareness about “Le Lien” – The Link in French – continues to grow in France, thanks to a program offered by an organization based in Strasbourg called One Voice. A section on the One Voice website traces the history of Link interest and coalitions in Anglophone nations and offers a [12-page booklet](#) on recent global developments regarding how animal abuse is linked to interpersonal violence.

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

### Six Stages of Veterinary Response to Animal Abuse Identified

In the midst of new legislative, ethical, diagnostic and professional dynamics affecting how veterinarians choose appropriate responses when animal abuse is suggested, a six-stage process has been identified paralleling human medicine’s trajectory in recognizing and responding to violence against the human members of the family. Over the past 25 years, these stages have involved: increased awareness and acceptance of a responsibility to intervene to protect animals; peer support from national veterinary associations; legislative support through laws granting immunity from liability for reporting; improved diagnostic tools to differentiate non-accidental from accidental injuries; publication of practice management guidelines; and identifying animal abuse investigation agencies in the community. This six-stage process has enabled veterinary medicine to make great advances in recent years in improving animal welfare.

-- Arkow, P. (2017, November-December). A species-spanning approach: 6 stages of veterinary response to animal cruelty, abuse, and neglect. *Canadian Vet*, 12(6), 1-8.

## Animal Hoarding Cases Reviewed

This systematic review of studies that investigated what the authors describe as animal hoarding disorder aimed to verify the socio-demographic characteristics of animal hoarders, conditions of the environment and the animals, quantity and species of hoarded animals, diagnostic criteria, and the therapeutic interventions applied. Empirical or documental articles written in English, Spanish or Portuguese were analyzed. Of 75 articles found nine were analyzed. The authors observed that hoarders were females and hoarded approximately more than 30 animals each. The environments were found to be unhealthy. Cats and dogs were the most frequently hoarded animals. This disorder produces great suffering for the individual, their families and also their animals. The authors conclude that due to the lack of empirical studies on the subject, additional researches needs to be conducted in order to fill this gap and, consequently, to construct appropriate intervention strategies.

-- Paloski, L.H., Ferreira, E.A., Costa, D.B., del Huerto, M.L., & de Oliveira, C.R., et al. (2017). *Animal hoarding disorder: A systematic review. Psico, 48(3), 243-249.*

## Help Requested for Dissertation on Arson/Animal Abuse Link



A doctoral student in the Criminology program at Nova Southeastern University in Florida is asking for help with his research into the Links between arson and animal abuse. Tom Hall, who is also a State Law Enforcement Officer with the Bureau of Fire and Arson Investigations, is attempting to track incidents of animal abuse (and perhaps more telling, animal mutilations) in Florida as part of his dissertation.

The dissertation will track arson clusters from 1995 to 2015 in Florida in an attempt to link these known clusters associated with a single arsonist to incidents of animal abuse in the same general geographic area. In the absence of criminal databases which include animal cruelty, few law enforcement tools are available to plot firesetting activity against pre- or post-animal abuse incidents.

Hall tells The LINK-Letter that animal abuse is only one of many aspects to the clusters he wants to examine, including percent of illumination and neighborhood socio-economic status. Animal abuse is being included because of a serial firesetter who was arrested in 2015; arson investigators found animal carcasses in a fire pit behind his home and a neighborhood survey uncovered disturbing details of missing pets. "From the fire and arson investigation side, we never thought to ask about missing pets and animal abuse before," he notes.

Hall notes that his study is not about firesetting and animal abuse alone, but rather is to explore many of the spatial-temporal and other conditions surrounding arson clusters set by a single offender. Anyone who can assist him in his research can contact Hall at [trhall@embarqmail.com](mailto:trhall@embarqmail.com).

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

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

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 and now has 235 bi-partisan co-sponsors in the House and 28 in the Senate. 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 Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, Homeland Security and Investigations. **S.322** is in the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry.



**Hawai'i HB 155** would have allowed 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 have ordered 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 Committee and was referred to the Judiciary Committee, **but no action had been taken when the Legislature adjourned on May 4.**



**Illinois SB 1261** amends the Marriage and Dissolution of Marriage Act to allow parties filing for divorce to file a joint petition for simplified dissolution if they have executed a written agreement allocating ownership and responsibility for their companion animals. The measure also allows the parties to petition for sole or joint ownership, contingent upon the court's consideration of what would be in the animals' best interests. **The bill was approved by Gov. Bruce Rauner on Aug. 25 and becomes effective Jan. 1, 2018.**



**Indiana SB 323** allows 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 was signed into law on April 21 by Gov. Eric Holcomb and became effective on July 1.**



**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.



**Michigan HB 4332** would make it a 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup>-degree offense, depending on severity, to knowingly torture or kill an animal with the intent to cause mental distress or exert control over a person. The bill passed the House on Nov. 29 by a vote of 90-15 and was sent to the Senate.



**Nevada** law defines harming an animal to harass a spouse or partner as domestic violence. **SB62** would have increased the penalty for this act to a Category B felony if the abuser is convicted of a similar act. **No action was taken before the time limit for legislative action expired.**



**New York A8663** would amend §23 of the state’s Domestic Relations Law to require the court to consider the best interest of a companion animal when awarding possession in a divorce or separation proceeding. The bill is in the Assembly Judiciary Committee.



**Ohio HB1** would expand the ability of courts to issue protection-from-abuse orders that include the animals of domestic violence survivors to individuals seeking protection orders in cases of dating violence. It would allow a court order of protection to require that a respondent not remove, damage, hide, harm, or dispose of any companion animal owned or possessed by the petitioner alleging dating violence. It also would allow a court order to authorize the petitioner, alleging dating violence, to remove a companion animal owned by that petitioner from the possession of the respondent. The bill has passed the House and is in the Senate Judiciary Committee.



**Pennsylvania HB1652** would allow divorcing parties to enter into a custody agreement for the possession and/or care of a companion animal. Such agreements may specify the time during which each party will possess the pet and each party’s financial responsibility regarding its care. The bill defines relevant factors which the court may consider. The bill is in the House Judiciary Committee.



**Texas SB 339 and HB 142** would have created a new offense of illegal sexual contact called “indecent assault” and allowed victims to obtain protective orders. Violations of these protective orders would have included harming, threatening, or interfering with the care, custody or control of a pet, companion animal or assistance animal belonging to the protected party. **No action was taken on either bill when the Legislature adjourned.**



**Rhode Island H5556** would have required courts to consider the best interest of the animal in awarding possession of a domestic animal in a divorce or separation proceeding. **The House Judiciary Committee recommended that the bill be held for further study.**



**Wyoming HB193** would have allowed courts to grant sole possession of any household pets to the petitioner in a protection order, and to order the respondent no not have any contact with any household pet or abduct, remove, conceal, or dispose of the animal. **The bill died when the legislature adjourned.**

### ***“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, either permanently or for a specified period of time. **A 2041** passed the Assembly. Both bills are in the Senate Economic Growth Committee.



**Rhode Island H5061** would have required courts to order the appointment of an animal care advocate wherever the custody or well-being of an animal is at issue. **The House Judiciary Committee recommended that the bill be held for further study.**

## *Animal Abuse and Child Maltreatment*



**Alabama HB393/SB273 was signed into law on May 19.** This new law allows for the use of a registered therapy dog in legal proceedings, when permitted by the judge, to assist a victim or witness in order to reduce unnecessary emotional distress and allow full and factual testimony. It authorizes a judge to use discretionary funds to offset the costs for a registered handler of a registered therapy dog used in a legal proceeding.



**California AB411** will allow child witnesses in any serious or violent felony cases to have a therapy or facility dog present during court testimony. Procedures will be established requiring the party seeking to have the dog present to attest to the training and credentials of the dog and its handler and facts necessitating the need for the dog. The court could reject the request if it finds the dog's presence would cause undue prejudice to the defendant or would be unduly disruptive to the court proceeding. The bill passed the House 79-0 and the Senate 39-0 and **was signed into law on Sept. 26.**



**Idaho SB 1089** amends Idaho's procedures for witnesses in criminal proceedings to allow facility dogs to remain at the witness stand with a child during testimony. **The measure was signed into law** by Gov. Butch Otter on March 27 and took effect July 1.



**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. **S1432** passed the Senate and both bills are in the Assembly Agriculture Committee.



**New York S2470** and companion bill **A2140**, and **S728** and companion bill **A3845**, would increase penalties for aggravated animal cruelty committed in the presence of a child. **S2470** is in the Senate Agriculture Committee; **A2140** is in the Assembly Codes Committee. **S728** passed the Senate and joined and **A3845** in the Assembly Agriculture Committee.



**Texas HB 289** would have made it a violation to harm or threaten a pet or assistance animal belonging to a child under a protection-from-abuse order. The bill was in the House Human Services Committee, but **no action had been taken when the Legislature adjourned.**

## *Animal Abuse and Elder Abuse*



**Washington HB 1153** addresses 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 as a crime which prosecutors may cite as reasons for filing charges. **The measure was signed into law on May 10** by Gov. Jay Inslee.

## *Animal Sexual Abuse*



**H.R. 1494/S.654 -- the PACT (Preventing Animal Cruelty and Torture) Act** – would amend and update 18 U.S. Code § 48 to expand the definition of “animal crushing,” as pertains to “crush videos,” to include any act in which animals are subjected to serious bodily injury or conduct that, if committed against a person, would be defined as sexual abuse or aggravated sexual abuse. The bills have 261 co-sponsors and are in the House and Senate Judiciary Committees.



**Kentucky HB 143** would have made 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 have been barred from owning dogs or cats for 5 years for a first offense, and lifetime for subsequent convictions. **The bill died in the Judiciary Committee.**



**Kentucky HB 480** would have created a new offense of sexual assault against an animal and allowed a peace officer to seize an animal. Accepted animal husbandry and veterinary medical practices would have been exempted. **The bill died 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 have allowed persons convicted of having sex with an animal to petition to have their names removed from the state sex offenders registry. **The bill was in committee when the Legislature adjourned.**



**Nevada AB 391** adds a new section to Nevada’s Revised Statutes, Chapter 201 (“Crimes Against Public Decency and Good Morals”) that now defines bestiality as a gross misdemeanor that can be upgraded to a Category D felony if the animal dies or suffers serious bodily injury as a result, or if the offender has a prior conviction for animal cruelty. Offenders will be required to permanently forfeit any animals in the home and cannot work with or volunteer where animals are present. Courts can authorize offenders to undergo psychological evaluation and counseling and to pay costs for the care and medical expenses of the animals. The measure will also cover anyone who causes, aids, promotes or observes bestiality. Accepted animal husbandry, veterinary and conformation judging practices are excluded. **The bill was signed into law on May 23** by Gov. Brian Sandoval and took effect Oct. 1.



**Texas SB 1232** creates a new section 21.09 of the Penal Code, making it a felony to commit bestiality, obtain an animal for this purpose, or organize, promote, conduct or observe bestiality. The crime is considered a state jail felony unless it is committed in the presence of a child, results in serious bodily injury or death of the animal, or the offender has a prior conviction, in which case it is a 2<sup>nd</sup>-degree felony. Generally accepted veterinary and animal husbandry practices are exempted. Upon conviction, the court may order the defendant to relinquish custody of any animals and to participate in a psychological treatment or other appropriate program. The measure passed the Senate and the House unanimously and **was signed into law and took effect Sept. 1, 2017.**



**Vermont H.62** adds a new category of sexual conduct to the various conditions defined as cruelty to animals. The measure amends 13 V.S.A. Chapter 8 to define sexual conduct as any act between a person and animal that involves contact or insertion between the mouth, sex organ or anus of a person and an animal without a bona fide veterinary or animal husbandry purpose. The definition extends to anyone possessing, selling, transferring, purchasing or obtaining an animal for sexual conduct; or organizing, promoting, aiding, abetting or participating as an observer; or permitting sexual conduct on his or her premises or advertising it. **The bill was signed into law on June 7 and took effect July 1.**



**West Virginia HB 2664** would have added 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 have been guilty of a misdemeanor, or a felony upon previous convictions or serious bodily injury or death to the animal. Courts would have been able to order offenders to surrender all their animals, prohibit ownership of animals for five or 15 years, and undergo psychiatric or psychological evaluation or counseling. **No action had been taken when the Legislature adjourned.**

### *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/HB 5882** defines animal hoarding (“hazardous accumulation of animals”) and adds it to the list of conduct that is considered cruelty to animals. The new law also requires any sentencing judge to consider whether such conduct is the result of a mental health disorder. **The bills became law on Oct. 6** without the signature of Gov. Gina Raimondo.

### *Psychological Evaluation of Offenders*



**Mississippi HB 575** would have defined malicious intent of a dog or cat as felony-level aggravated cruelty, mandated psychological evaluations for offenders, and mandated police and sheriffs to report all investigations of 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**, “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 have created a new category of “extreme cruelty to animals” and would have required persons convicted of this offense to undergo psychological counseling. **The bill was in committee when the regular Legislature session ended.**

## *Animal Abuse and Other Crimes*



**California AB 197** would add animal abuse, child abuse, elder and dependent adult abuse, and other crimes as “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 have increased the penalty for attending an animal fighting contest from a Class A misdemeanor to a Level 6 felony. The bill was in the Committee on Corrections and Criminal Law but **no action had been taken when the Legislature adjourned.**



**Kentucky HB 135** would have redefined animal torture to include deliberate neglect or physical abuse that results in death or serious physical injury to a dog or cat, and barred offenders from owning dogs or cats. **The bill died 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** requested 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 but **no action had been taken by the Senate when the Legislative session ended.**



**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 Codes 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 have appropriated 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 was in committee when the Legislature adjourned.**



**Rhode Island H5728** would have imposed 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 House Judiciary Committee recommended the bill be held for further study.**



**Texas HB 1357** would have defined 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. It also made technical corrections to assist prosecutors in animal cruelty cases. The bill had been approved unanimously by the House Criminal Jurisprudence Committee but **no further action had been taken when the Legislature adjourned.**

### *Cross-Reporting*

 **Iowa S.F. 129** would have required 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 have been 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 have been required to, order psychological or psychiatric evaluation or treatment. The bill would have created seven new criminal offenses describing animal abuse, neglect, torture, abandonment, and endangerment. The bill was in the Senate Agriculture Committee but **no action had been taken when the Legislature adjourned.**

 **Maine LD 157** would have required 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 veterinarians are permitted to report cruelty or neglect, and are required to report only “aggravated” animal cruelty. **The bill died in the Senate.**



 Gov. Larry Hogan **signed Maryland HB 1463 into law** on May 4. It requires a veterinarian who believes that an animal that she or he has treated has been subjected to cruelty or fighting to report the case to law enforcement or county animal control in a timely manner. Existing law only encouraged reporting and did not include animal fighting among the provisions. Practitioners will continue to have immunity from civil and criminal liability when reporting. The bill passed the House by a vote of 118-15 and was approved unanimously 47-0 in the Senate. **It took effect Oct. 1.**

 **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.

 Three companion measures address cross-reporting in **Michigan. HB 4441** would amend the Child Protection Law to add animal control officers to the list of professions mandated to report suspected child abuse or child neglect. **HB 4442** would amend the Michigan Penal Code to require Child Protective Services employees to report suspected animal abuse or neglect to an animal control or law enforcement officer in the jurisdiction where the animal was found, with anonymity, the presumption of having acted in good faith, and immunity from civil or criminal liability. Failure to report, or making a false report, would be punishable offenses. **HB 4443** would amend the Code of Criminal Procedure to make the intentional false reporting of animal abuse a felony. The bills are in the House Judiciary Committee.

 **Minnesota** veterinarians are mandated to report suspected animal cruelty, abuse and neglect to peace officers, humane agents or animal control officers. **HF 787** and **SF1167** would give them immunity from civil liability. **HF 787** is in the Agriculture Policy Committee and **SF1167** is in the Agriculture, Rural Development & Housing Police Committee.

 **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.

 **Ohio HB147** would add agents of the Ohio Humane Society to professionals mandated to report child abuse. It also would repeal a provision of the Humane Society Law that specifically requires humane society agents to remove a child from his or her parents when the agent deems it to be in the child's best interest. Current law designates agents of county humane societies as mandated reporters, but not agents of the Ohio Humane Society. Current law also requires public children's services agencies to prepare a memorandum of understanding to be signed by specified law enforcement and judicial officers in their jurisdiction, including the county humane society; the bill would allow the Ohio Humane Society to be a signatory as well. The bill is in the Civil Justice Committee.

 **Pennsylvania SB 176** would add animal control and humane society police officers as mandated reporters of child abuse, and social services employees to report animal cruelty. The bill is in the Senate Judiciary Committee.



 **Pennsylvania HB 1238 ("Libre's Law") was signed into law on June 28.** It used Link premises to overhaul the state's anti-cruelty statutes with enhanced penalties, and grants immunity from liability for veterinarians, technicians and assistants who report suspected animal abuse.

 **Rhode Island H5392** would have required all child protection and domestic violence caseworkers to report suspected animal abuse to animal control and humane agencies, and that animal control and humane officers be mandated to report suspected child abuse and domestic violence to child protection and domestic violence agencies. **The House Judiciary Committee recommended the bill be held for further study.**

## ***THE LINK... IN THE NEWS***

### **Woman Charged with DUI & Animal Abuse While Riding a Horse**

A Lakeland, Fla. woman was charged with DUI and animal neglect for allegedly riding a horse down a highway while drunk. Polk County Sheriff's officials told [news media](#) that someone called 911 to report a woman on horseback who appeared confused and possibly in danger. Officers conducted a sobriety test and said that Donna Byrne, 53, had a blood alcohol level of .161, considerably higher than Florida's legal limit of .08. She was also charged with animal neglect for endangering and failing to provide proper protection for the horse.



**Donna Byrne**

**Animal Abuse**    **Animal Sexual Abuse**    **Domestic Violence**    **Elder Abuse**    **Other Crimes**  
 **Child Abuse and Neglect**    **Child Sexual Abuse**



### Convicted Dog Killer Charged with Murdering His Mother

A Vancouver, B.C. man who admitted in 2012 to beating his dog to death with a baseball bat because he believed the animal to be possessed has been accused by Canadian authorities of killing his mother. Police had to use a flash-bang and non-lethal ammunition to storm the barricaded house of Brian Whitlock, 28, after an eight-hour standoff. Whitlock was charged with second-degree murder in the death of his mother, Barbara, [CTV](#) reported. Whitlock had been sentenced to 60 days in jail and a lifetime ban on owning animals, and was under court orders to undergo psychiatric treatment as part of his probation for the killing of "Captain," a two-year-old German shepherd, but it was unclear whether he had received it.

**Brian Whitlock**

- Animal Abuse
- Animal Sexual Abuse
- Domestic Violence
- Elder Abuse
- Other Crimes
- Child Abuse and Neglect
- Child Sexual Abuse

### Woman, 89, Removed from Apartment with 140 Cats

San Diego County sheriff's deputies and adult protective officials were called in to remove an 89-year-old woman found to be without adequate care after Animal Services officers removed 140 semi-feral cats living in filthy, feces-ridden and crowded conditions in a Lakeside, Calif. two-bedroom apartment. The [San Diego Union-Tribune](#) reported that the woman was taken to a hospital. Grant Israel, 64, said his family's love of cats started out with the best of intentions but successive breeding soon got out of hand and they could not find homes for all the kittens. Neighbors said they had an idea that there was a cat problem but could not imagine the scope of it. Most of the cats appeared to be healthy and well-fed and Animal Services has apparently decided not to file charges. The cats were taken to two county shelters where they may be put up for adoption.

- Animal Abuse
- Animal Sexual Abuse
- Domestic Violence
- Elder Abuse
- Other Crimes
- Child Abuse and Neglect
- Child Sexual Abuse

### Pair Charged in Triple-Homicide Arson and Blackmail Scheme that Also Killed Dog

Prosecutors in a triple-homicide, arson and animal cruelty trial in Red Deer, Alberta are arguing that the two men charged in the crimes also shot the family's dog before fleeing the scene. Gordon and Sandra Klaus, and their daughter Monica Klaus, were shot and burned to death in a fire that consumed their home in 2013. Castor Fire Department officials testified that they found a



**Remains of the Klaus home after the fire**



**Jason Klaus (left), and Joshua Frank**

suspicious fuel [Global News Canada](#) reported that charges were filed against the Klaus' son, Jason Klaus, 41, and Joshua Frank, 31. Frank earlier told investigators that he had had a forced sexual encounter with Klaus when he was 14, and

that Klaus had paid him between \$3,500 and \$4,000 in the months following the fire to help him carry out the murders and to keep quiet about it.

- Animal Abuse
- Animal Sexual Abuse
- Domestic Violence
- Elder Abuse
- Other Crimes
- Child Abuse and Neglect
- Child Sexual Abuse



**Shelan and Elanceia Gardner**

### Convicted Dog Killer Confesses to Strangling His Wife

A Fort Worth, Texas man who had been convicted of felony animal cruelty for killing his family’s pit bull with a hammer and misdemeanor threatening of a family member at gunpoint has reportedly admitted to strangling and sexually assaulting his wife while the couple’s children slept in a nearby room. The Fort Worth [Star-Telegram](#) said Shelan Gardner, 32, made the admissions while being questioned by homicide detectives in the death of Elanceia “Lana” Gardner. The newspaper also reported that Gardner had been jailed when his

probation in the two earlier cases was revoked for failing to enroll in anger management classes or submit to urine drug tests, and again for unlawful possession of a firearm and repeated bail violations. While in jail awaiting available bed space at a substance abuse facility, he wrote to a judge saying, “I’m not a bad guy.”

- Animal Abuse     Animal Sexual Abuse     Domestic Violence     Elder Abuse     Other Crimes
- Child Abuse and Neglect     Child Sexual Abuse



**Inmates load dogs into trailer**

### Suspected Dogfighting Farm Owner Charged with Animal Cruelty, Stolen Property

Sheriff’s deputies in Adams County, Miss. arrested Tommie Queen on 50 charges of aggravated cruelty to animals and one count of possession of stolen property after 56 wounded and hungry dogs, 25 dog skulls and a stolen truck were reportedly found on his property which authorities said was used as a dog fighting farm. The [Natchez Democrat](#) reported that several dogs had mangled feet and infected, swollen jaws. The ASPCA is assisting with the investigation and medical attention for the animals. Jail inmates were enlisted to help round up the dogs and a GoFundMe account set up to help care for the dogs had reached half of its \$50,000 goal.

- Animal Abuse     Animal Sexual Abuse     Domestic Violence     Elder Abuse     Other Crimes
- Child Abuse and Neglect     Child Sexual Abuse

### Daughter with Elder Abuse History Charged Again with Animal Cruelty



**Lindsay Anderson**

A woman with a history of biting her mother and animal cruelty has been arrested again on cruelty charges for allegedly beating a Chihuahua. [NBC-Connecticut](#) reported that Lindsay Anderson, 25, of Glastonbury, Conn., admitted to police that she threw the dog against a wall as hard as she could. Police found the dog with a swollen eye, cuts, bruises and possible burn marks. Anderson had been arrested in 2012, accused of biting her mother and throwing the family dog. She was acquitted of animal cruelty, disorderly conduct and violating a protective order but was found guilty of third-degree assault and interfering with an emergency call and placed on two years’ probation. Police said that Anderson was intoxicated at the time of both incidents.

- Animal Abuse     Animal Sexual Abuse     Domestic Violence     Elder Abuse     Other Crimes
- Child Abuse and Neglect     Child Sexual Abuse

## Murder Suspect Leads Investigators to Graves of Ex-Wife and Dog

A man suspected in the murder of his ex-wife in Ontario, Calif. helped lead Riverside County investigators to remains believed to be those of her and her dog. [KTLA-TV](#) said that Dalen Ware led detectives to a shallow grave in a rural desert area where the bodies believed to be those of Julia Jacobson and her dog, “Boogie,” were found. Jacobson, a former U.S. Army captain, was reported missing on Sept. 2 in San Diego. An investigation led authorities to Ontario and a subsequent arrest of Ware in Laveen Village in Phoenix, Ariz.



Dalen Ware

Animal Abuse    Animal Sexual Abuse    Domestic Violence    Elder Abuse    Other Crimes  
 Child Abuse and Neglect    Child Sexual Abuse

## Mother Charged with Child Abuse and Animal Cruelty in Hoarding Case

Amanda Vicente, 39, was charged with one count of child abuse and 17 counts of animal cruelty after police investigating a report of a stray dog reportedly found 19 dead animals and 17 living ones in her New Bedford, Mass. Home. [The Standard-Times](#) reported that the dead animals included lizards, hamsters and birds, while several of the surviving animals were described as emaciated. The woman’s 13-year-old son was said to be living in the home among the dead animals, including lizards in cages in his room, and feces and trash scattered around the house. The boy was placed with relatives and the surviving animals were taken to a veterinarian for treatment.

Animal Abuse    Animal Sexual Abuse    Domestic Violence    Elder Abuse    Other Crimes  
 Child Abuse and Neglect    Child Sexual Abuse



## Jealous Boyfriend Charged with Decapitating a Puppy and Assault

A Fayetteville, N. Car. teen was charged with felony domestic violence, animal cruelty and weapons offenses for allegedly choking his girlfriend because he was jealous of her talking to other men, and decapitating her puppy. Antonio Hollywood Campbell, 18, was arrested on Nov. 20 after his girlfriend, Jordan Stevens, told deputies about the alleged incidents. The [Fayetteville Observer](#) reported that three weeks earlier, he allegedly told her, “If you ain’t gonna be with me, then I am going to kill your dog.”

**Antonio H. Campbell** Cumberland County Sheriff’s Office reports said Campbell tied a leash around the dog’s neck and spun it around, then dragged the dog behind a car, then put the dog’s head between two cinder blocks and cut it off with a hatchet.

Animal Abuse    Animal Sexual Abuse    Domestic Violence    Elder Abuse    Other Crimes  
 Child Abuse and Neglect    Child Sexual Abuse

## Family Dog Also Killed in Triple Murder-Suicide

Police in Mapleton, Utah were investigating a triple murder-suicide in which the family’s dog was also killed. Investigators said Timothy Griffith, 45, shot his wife, Jessica Griffith, 42, their son Alexandre, 5, his stepdaughter Samantha Badel, 16, and the dog before turning the gun on himself, according to the [Deseret News](#). The family had moved to Utah from Switzerland only a few months earlier. A motive for the tragedy was still under investigation.

Animal Abuse    Animal Sexual Abuse    Domestic Violence    Elder Abuse    Other Crimes  
 Child Abuse and Neglect    Child Sexual Abuse



### Man Charged with Beating Dog in Jealous Rage

A man who allegedly severely beat his girlfriend’s dog because he was jealous of the attention she gave it has been charged in Salisbury, Md. with two counts of animal cruelty and malicious destruction of property. James Michael Watson, 37, of Odenton, Md., allegedly inflicted significant injuries to “Brooklyn,” a bull dog, including a two-inch laceration to the top of its head and significant injuries to its left eye and nose, according to the [Salisbury Daily Times](#).

James Michael Watson

- Animal Abuse     Animal Sexual Abuse     Domestic Violence     Elder Abuse
- Other Crimes     Child Abuse and Neglect     Child Sexual Abuse

### Alleged Drug Dealer Charged with Animal Cruelty

An Everett, Mass. man had his bail for drug distribution charges revoked when he was charged with animal cruelty for allegedly dragging a puppy down a driveway at 3 a.m. Police arrested Mark Rodney Hurd, 22, after reportedly seeing the dog coughing blood and suffering from a leg injury, [WCVB-TV](#) reported. The dog suffered multiple fractures and bruises, its lungs were filled with fluid, and there was evidence of strangulation.



Mark Rodney Hurd

- Animal Abuse     Animal Sexual Abuse     Domestic Violence     Elder Abuse     Other Crimes
- Child Abuse and Neglect     Child Sexual Abuse

### Cruelty Charges Upgraded to Felonies in Shooting Deaths of Kittens and Rat



The West Hartford, Conn. man charged with animal cruelty and assaulting his girlfriend ([See the October 2017 LINK-Letter](#)) had his charges increased from misdemeanors to felonies after a veterinarian produced radiology pictures indicating that his girlfriend’s kittens, named “Ziggy” and “Kronos,” and pet rat, named “Mortimer,” had been shot multiple times. Corey McCall, 22, had been arrested on Sept. 20 and also charged with weapon, drug and disorderly conduct offenses; the [Hartford Courant](#) reported that McCall has five prior domestic violence incidents. Saying that McCall has “severe violent tendencies” and that the attacks on the animals were “done to instill fear, power and control,” prosecutor Danielle O’Connell had the cruelty charges upgraded to felonies, and Superior Court Judge Matthew Budzik increased McCall’s bail from \$75,000 to \$125,000. Under provisions of Connecticut’s unique “Desmond’s Law” permitting victims of animal cruelty to have court representation ([See the June 2016 LINK-Letter](#)), UConn law student Taylor Hansen was appointed to represent the victims, and animal law advocates with Desmond’s Army witnesses the proceedings in support.

- Animal Abuse     Animal Sexual Abuse     Domestic Violence     Elder Abuse     Other Crimes
- Child Abuse and Neglect     Child Sexual Abuse

## ***LINK TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES***

**Dec. 14 – (Online):** Allie Phillips will lead a [webinar](#) for the Institute for Human-Animal Connection on “Advances in Human-Animal Interaction Laws” including domestic violence pet protection, cross-reporting, pets in women’s shelters, and more. LINK-Letter readers can use the code CHANGE for one-time free access.

**Dec. 14 – Albuquerque, N.Mex.:** Tammy Fiebelkorn, President of Positive Links, and Grants Police Chief Marty Vigil will present on “The Link between Animal Abuse and Human Violence” at the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Conference of the [New Mexico Association of Chiefs of Police](#).

**Jan. 10, 2018 – Pittsfield, Mass.:** The [HAVEN](#) (Human/Animal Violence Education Network) Network will meet at the Berkshire Humane Society.

**Jan. 11, 2018 – (Online):** Phil Arkow and Amber Ahern will lead a webinar on “How to Build a Successful and Sustainable Link Coalition” as part of the Institute for Human-Animal Connection’s Interconnected Webinar Series. [Registration](#) is free for *LINK-Letter* readers: use Promo Code COSHELTER.

**Jan. 18 – Philadelphia, Pa.:** Phil Arkow will present on The Link to the Pennsylvania Bar Association’s [Animal Law Committee](#).

**Jan. 23 – Oklahoma City, Okla.:** The [Oklahoma Link Coalition](#) will meet at the Regional Food Bank.

**Feb. 14-15 – Altoona, Iowa:** Randy Lockwood will present at the Iowa Veterinary Medical Association’s [Winter Conference](#).

**Feb. 15 – (Online):** Allie Phillips will lead a [webinar](#) for the Institute for Human-Animal Connection on “Linked-Informed Response: Changing Agency Procedures” about how human and animal welfare agencies, prosecutors, law enforcement, and allied professionals are changing their policies and procedures. LINK-Letter readers can use the code CHANGE for one-time free access.

**March 9 – Dallas, Texas:** Phil Arkow will speak at the [North Texas Link Coalition](#)’s CEU Conference.

**March 21 – Philadelphia, Pa.:** Phil Arkow will speak to the Animals and Social Work class at the University of Pennsylvania [School of Social Policy & Practice](#).

**April 26-18 – Austin, Texas:** Phil Arkow will present “Who ‘Ya Gonna Call? Abuse Busters!” at the 10<sup>th</sup> Annual [Texas Unites for Animals](#) conference.

**May 11 – Richmond, Va.:** Phil Arkow will present on “Species-Spanning Medicine: The Link between Animal Abuse and Other Forms of Family Violence” at the Virginia Commonwealth University [Department of Psychiatry](#)’s Grand Rounds.

**June 5 – Bloomington, Ill.:** Phil Arkow will present at the [Prairie States Animal Welfare Conference](#).

**July 6 – Vancouver, B.C., Canada:** Phil Arkow will present on The Link, Clinical and Diagnostic Indicators of Animal Abuse, and Addressing Practice Management Concerns in Responding to Suspected Abuse at the [Canadian Veterinary Medical Association](#) Convention.

**Oct. 22-23 – Oklahoma City, Okla.:** The Kirkpatrick Foundation will sponsor the [Oklahoma Animal Conference](#) as part of its Safe & Humane initiative.

**Nov. 22-24 – Calgary, Alberta, Canada:** Phil Arkow will speak at the [Alberta Veterinary Medical Association](#)'s Veterinary Forensics Workshop.

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.

Senior Staff 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

#### Robin Brock

Advocacy Programs Manager,  
National Coalition Against Domestic Violence  
Denver, Colo.

#### 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  
Woodstock, Ga.

#### Jane A. Hunt

Community Volunteer  
Loveland, Colo.

#### Mark Kumpf, CAWA

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

#### Randall Lockwood, Ph.D.

Senior Vice President, Anti-Cruelty Special Projects  
ASPCA  
Falls Church, Va.

#### 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.