



NATIONAL LINK COALITION

Working together to stop violence against people and animals

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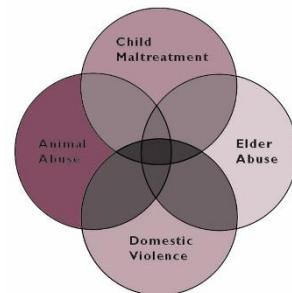
ON THE LINK BETWEEN ANIMAL ABUSE AND HUMAN VIOLENCE



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Phil Arkow, Coordinator and Editor

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ANIMAL ABUSE AND... CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Federal Agencies Link Animal Abuse with Terrorism

The potential for animal abuse to predict acts of interpersonal violence has reached the attention of the nation's top anti-terrorism forces. The Joint Counterterrorism Assessment Team (JCAT), a collaboration of the National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC), the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), and the FBI, has published an extraordinary report describing animal cruelty as a possible warning behavior for terrorism.



In a ["First Responders' Toolbox"](#) published on July 18, the three agencies declare that "animal cruelty, particularly when premeditated in nature, is one example of a novel aggression warning behavior" and a type of "experimental aggression" that may be useful in "identifying an accelerated and increased risk of violence that should elevate authorities' concern." The report also notes that the FBI now differentiates between impulsive/affective acts of animal cruelty versus premeditated/predatory acts, both of which are important to our understanding of human aggression (*See accompanying article*).

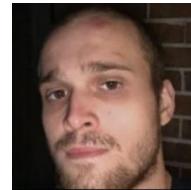
The three agencies emphasize that "reporting, investigating, and prosecuting animal cruelty may help minimize violent acts toward humans, including terrorism," and encourage first responders, animal control, animal shelters, social services, and veterinarians, peers, neighbors, and family members to report suspected animal cruelty to authorities for further vetting. "Their participation becomes a force multiplier and may assist communities and law enforcement with identifying, assessing and managing threats of planned violence while promoting public safety."

They note that neighbors and veterinarians are well-positioned to witness and report animal abuse earlier than reluctant family members who are fearful or intimidated by the perpetrator's abusive

actions. Animal control officers, in particular, may be the first to respond to animal abuse calls and be granted access to residences before law enforcement or social services personnel.

They urge law enforcement to conduct National Crime Information Center (NCIC) checks and to be familiar with aggression warning behaviors, such as animal cruelty which is described in NCIC Code 7201, in order to assess the totality of facts and circumstances that could lead to violent offenses against people. Documenting animal cruelty offenses can also give prosecutors additional charges which may strengthen their case.

The Toolbox cites the case of Gregory Lepsky (*See the June 2017 LINK-Letter*) as an example where early intervention in an animal cruelty case may have prevented a mass bombing attack in New York City. It also reviews the first FBI data collection of animal cruelty cases through the NIBRS system (*See the January 2018 LINK-Letter*).



Gregory Lepsky

The Toolbox offers tips to law enforcement about how to investigate animal cruelty, gather crime scene evidence, and how to “be observant for other indicators of animal crimes or suspicious warning indicators of violence toward humans.” Such indicators include:

- Social media and email expressing intent to engage in violent activity;
- Literature and internet research regarding violent extremist groups, bomb-making and weaponry;
- Acquisition of unusual weapons, ammunition, personal protective gear and tactical clothing;
- Recent and significant personal loss or humiliation, whether real or perceived, such as a death, breakup, divorce, or loss of a job, status or self-image;
- Statements or behaviors suggestive of suicide, end-of-life planning, or destructiveness toward the world at large;
- Seeking religious or political justification for such acts;
- Travel to a conflict zone in support of a foreign terrorist organization.

“Even though I’ve had many discussions with my friends at DHS over The Link and its connection to terrorism, I always thought it fell on deaf ears,” said John Thompson, Deputy Executive Director and Chief of Staff of the National Sheriffs Association and a member of the National Link Coalition’s steering committee. “Never, never, never in my wildest imagination would I have thought the Department of Homeland Security would put out a notice identifying animal cruelty as a link to terrorism. WE ARE MAKING A DIFFERENCE!”



FBI Study Examines “Affective” and “Predatory” Animal Cruelty Offenders

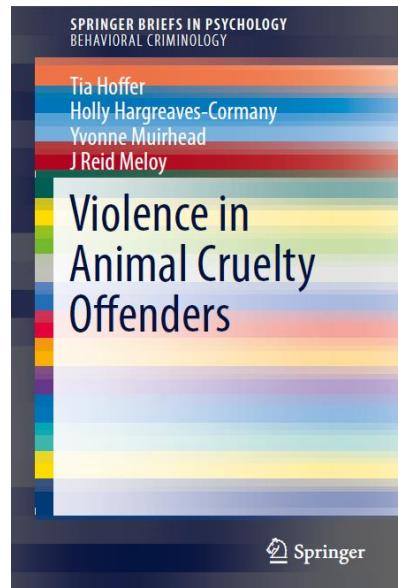
One of the most extensive studies to date on the underlying psychological, behavioral and physiological features of animal cruelty offenders and their links to interpersonal violence has been published by the FBI’s Behavioral Analysis Unit. The 104-page study supports the link between animal cruelty and interpersonal violence but does not support the “graduation hypothesis” that animal cruelty necessarily escalates into crimes against humans.

The study is believed to be the first to differentiate between two key types of animal-directed aggression to better understand the motivations, methods, and judicial and therapeutic responses to cases of animal cruelty. “Affective” offenders are primarily reactive and impulsive, characterized by emotions of anger and/or fear and responsive to a perceived imminent threat. “Predatory” offenders are characterized by cold-blooded premeditated planning and a lack of emotion.

The study extensively reviewed the histories of 259 adult offenders in 41 states who had been charged with active, neglectful and sexual abuse animal cruelty. Among the many key findings were:

- 97% of offenders were male, with a mean age of 34, and ranging in age from 17 to 82.
- 76% were unmarried, 61% had children.
- One-half had known histories of substance abuse. 89% had histories of prior arrests representing multiple sex, property, weapons, interpersonal violence, and animal cruelty crimes; 55% had criminal arrest histories following the animal cruelty offense.
- 60% of all offenders (72% of affective and 49% of predatory) engaged in intimate partner violence prior, concurrent to, or following the animal cruelty offense.
- Affective offenders were more likely to beat, kick, throw, or choke the animals; predatory offenders were more likely to shoot, stab, mutilate, torture, and burn their victims.
- 64% of victims were dogs, 24% cats, 4% birds, 3% cows, 2% rabbits, and 5% other species. Among dogs, pit bulls and pit bull mixes were significantly overrepresented at 26.5% of the victims. 46% of the animal victims were under one year of age. 63.3% of the offenders had a relationship with the animal victim.
- Other people were present in 69% of the incidents.
- Offenders who either had children, resided with children, or had children present at the location of the incident had higher rates of being arrested for child maltreatment.
- The most frequently noted motivations were displaced aggression, retaliation against an animal, punishment for the animal’s unwanted behavior, and the animal being unwanted.

Contrary to the graduation hypothesis that animal abuse desensitizes offenders and causes them to escalate to interpersonal violence, the study found that animal cruelty offenses preceded intimate partner violence in about 23% of cases but followed intimate partner violence in more than 73% of the cases.





Tia Hoffer

The study widely corroborates the Link proposition and the theme of family violence pervades many of the animal cruelty cases included in the study. Most commonly, records indicate that the subject abused not only the animal but his girlfriend or wife as well. In more than one instance, the mistreatment of an animal alerted law enforcement to the mistreatment of children residing in the same home.

“Research conducted on the Link or correlate between animal cruelty and interpersonal violence may provide insight into these types of violent behavior, and underscores the importance of collaboration between law

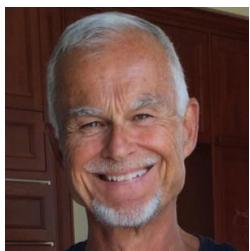
enforcement, animal control, legal, medical, veterinary, and mental health professionals,” the authors write. “This should increase the effective identification of animal cruelty and interpersonal violence offenders, as well as improve rates of conviction and enhanced sentencing, therapy for witnesses and perpetrators, and solutions to the social problems involved with animal abuse.”



Holly Hargreaves-Cormany

The authors describe three main contentions from the literature with respect to the association between animal cruelty and human violence:

- Children who abuse animals are more likely to become violent toward humans;
- Adults who abuse animals are more likely to commit interpersonal violence; and
- Animal cruelty in the home typically indicates that there is concurrent interpersonal violence.



J. Reid Meloy

They note that most researchers studying the Link acknowledge that it is not a simple causal or correlational relationship. Consequently, the study includes extensively referenced briefings on such topics as: attachment; empathy; motivations for animal cruelty and other crimes; the relationships between violence, antisocial personality disorder and psychopathy; and challenges involved in predicting the risk of cruelty and other violence.

The authors offer suggestions for law enforcement, criminal justice and mental health professionals working with animal cruelty offenders, including:

- Given that the study did not support the graduation theory that the majority of offenders perpetrate violence against persons following the animal cruelty act, it is important for animal cruelty investigators to look for prior acts of violence which had not been uncovered previously. Understanding the offender’s past offenses and the full extent of his animal cruelty behavior can also assist prosecutors in making an informed decision regarding arguing for detention, bail/bond, considering any enhancements, and/or the potential sentence such as incarceration, further evaluation, and/or treatment considerations.
- Investigators of domestic violence, stalking, child abuse, and other interpersonal violence acts should ask if there are any animals in the residence and what interactions the offender may have with the animal.
- Mental health professionals should understand the context within which they are assessing violence perpetrated by the offender to include animal cruelty offenses.

- Law enforcement officers, prosecutors, the courts, and mental health evaluators might consider applying the specifics of the act as being affective or predatory in nature in the charges, sentencing, assessment, and treatment of animal cruelty offenders.

The authors conclude, "It is hoped that the current study's analysis regarding affective and predatory violence may contribute to the literature regarding effective evaluations and treatment modalities for aggressive offenders and will subsequently assist law enforcement, the courts, mental health and parole/probation in the development of useful strategies to address this problem."

-- Hoffer, T., Hargreaves-Cormany, H., Muirhead, Y., & Meloy, J.R. (2018). *Violence in Animal Cruelty Offenders*. New York: Springer Briefs in Psychology/Behavioral Criminology.

Study Examines Animal Sex Offenders and their Links to Other Crimes

A new study is shining additional light on the behaviors, backgrounds and crimes of animal sex offenders, finding significant co-occurrence of animal sexual abuse with child and adult sex abuse and other crimes.

Jenny Edwards, a Washington State independent researcher and field expert in animal sexual abuse and exploitation, conducted the study. She explored new and original data on 456 bestiality-related arrests in the U.S. between 1975-2015 for direct and indirect sexual contact with an animal as well as the collection and use of animal pornography. The study examined patterns of offending, offender characteristics, and how cases were adjudicated and resolved through the courts. Significant findings included:



Jenny Edwards

- More than one-third (34%) of all bestiality-related incidents also involved the sexual abuse of children and adults.
- More than half (51%) of the offenders had a prior or subsequent criminal record involving adult/child sexual abuse, animal cruelty/sexual abuse, property-related offenses, drugs/alcohol, or interpersonal violence.
- The number of women offenders seems to be rising.
- Men are offending later in life than previously thought.
- In 75% of arrests, an animal was fondled, raped, killed during or after the sex act, or sexually abused after death.
- About half of the offenders were prosecuted. Fewer than one-third of the prosecutions resulted in conviction, receiving an average sentence of 24 months in jail. Among offenders who collected or used animal pornography but did not have sex with an animal, only four were charged for that offense.

"Bestiality is an uncomfortable topic that no one really wants to talk about," Edwards tells *The LINK-Letter*, noting that her study has been submitted to a journal for publication. "The broad range of sexual assault patterns and legal outcomes suggests that zoophilia and bestiality are more pervasive and serious than previously thought, and points to a need for additional research to aid in detection, intervention, sentencing, and treatment protocols.

-- Edwards, M.J. (2018, in press). Arrest and prosecution of animal sex abuse (bestiality) offenders in the United States 1975-2015.

Michigan Bill Would Create Court Advocates for Animals

A new bill in the Michigan Legislature would allow courts to appoint advocates to represent the interests of animals in criminal proceedings. Similar measures have already been enacted in Connecticut and Rhode Island.

HB 6029 specifies that the advocate would be appointed from a list of attorneys and law school students provided to the court by an animal welfare clinic. It would allow the advocate to monitor the case, consult with individuals who have information that may aid the judge, and review records relating to the animal's condition and the defendant's actions. The advocate could also attend hearings, recommend and coordinate expert witness testimony as necessary, present a victim impact statement on behalf of the animal, and make recommendations regarding the animal's placement.



Rep. Abdullah Hammoud

The measure was introduced on May 17 by Rep. Abdullah Hammoud (D – Dearborn) with 14 co-sponsors and is in the House Agriculture Committee.

Rhode Island Expands Immunity for Reporting Animal Abuse

Rhode Island Gov. Gina Raimondo signed into law **H 7986** on July 2. Currently, veterinarians in the state have immunity from civil and criminal liability for good-faith reporting of suspected animal abuse, neglect or abandonment. **H 7986** extends this immunity to include veterinary technicians, animal shelter and kennel employees, and anyone "entrusted with the care and custody of an animal." Reports are to be made to local or state police, animal control officers or humane organizations. Failure to report is punishable by a fine of up to \$500. The reporter is not obligated to further investigate the alleged abuse.



Gov. Gina Raimondo

ANIMAL ABUSE AND... COMMUNITY VIOLENCE



Amanda Allen

Interpersonal Violence May Be Triggered by Disputes Over Animals (Once Again...)

In our [July LINK-Letter](#), we recounted the tragic story of a 2013 incident in which a Phoenix, Ariz. man who had become increasingly unhinged by the barking dogs in his neighborhood went on a rampage and killed four of his neighbors, two of their dogs, and himself. A similar tragedy unfolded more recently in Lithonia, Ga.

The [Atlanta Journal-Constitution](#) reported that on June 29, a dispute over a dog ended with a deadly shooting. Amanda Allen, also known as Amanda Longmire, 28, was charged with allegedly shooting her 24-year-old neighbor, Tomorrow Milford. According to police, the two had had an ongoing dispute over Milford's dogs' behavior. An encounter between those dogs and Allen's dog that morning apparently escalated into a physical confrontation and Milford was shot in the chest. Allen has been charged with murder.

ANIMAL ABUSE AND... CHILD ABUSE/SEXUAL ABUSE

Study Links Animal Cruelty with History of Child Abuse

An extensive new literature review is reporting that children who abuse animals may have been abused themselves.



Dr. Richard Lee-Kelland

Dr. Richard Lee-Kelland, from the University of Bristol, and Dr. Fiona Finlay, from St. Martins Hospital in Bath in the UK, reported that children aged 10 and up who intentionally hurt animals are two to three times more likely to have been abused than are children who treat animals with respect. They also found that children who witness violence between their parents are three times more likely to abuse animals.

The associations appear to increase with age: the odds of cruelty to animals being an indicator of physical child abuse is about three times higher in 5-year-olds but five times higher in 12-year-olds.

The study did not prove a cause-and-effect link between child abuse and animal abuse, and reports of girls abusing animals are less prevalent than boys. "There is some suggestion that girls who do report that they abuse animals are more likely to be part of a wider abuse," they wrote.

They noted that animal abuse has been more frequently reported in children with behavioral disorders such as attention deficit, hyperactivity, conduct disorders and depression, but the review did not find any studies which explored animal abuse within these conditions as a risk factor for child abuse. They observed that children who have developmental delay may be more likely to display "explorative" animal abuse at an older age than would otherwise be expected. They also noted an absence of research investigating the prevalence of sexual abuse of animals in children or the role that sexual abuse of the child plays in subsequent development of bestiality.

The review found that animal abuse is common among children, with up to 44% of children likely to display such behavior at some point. But they suspect the true rate is likely much higher, because parents or children may be unwilling to report it.

They presented a diagram with a mnemonic device called "FINISH" that includes questions which should be asked routinely by physicians, veterinarians and children's services agencies to help uncover patterns of abuse. "Asking about a history of animal abuse in a safeguarding history should be commonplace, and information sharing between veterinary and child services should be promoted to protect vulnerable children and animals," they recommended.

-- Lee-Kelland, R., & Finlay, F. (2018, July). Children who abuse animals: When should you be concerned about child abuse? A review of the literature. *Archives of Disease in Childhood*.

F	Food – Are animal in the house adequately fed and watered?
I	Injury – Have family animals been injured or died? Were they taken to a vet?
N	Number – How many pets are there currently/Previously kept in the household? Is there a high turnover of animals due to death or injury?
I	Intimidation – Is the treatment of animals ever used to intimidate or control other members of the family (for example threatening to kill an animal if a partner leaves)?
S	Shelter – Are animals being housed adequately?
H	How – Are injuries to animals consistent with the mechanism given?

ANIMAL ABUSE AND... DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Pet-Friendly Shelter Opens in Ottawa, Ontario

What is believed to be only the second domestic violence shelter in Canada to accept survivors' pets opened its animal housing facilities on June 19. [Interval House of Ottawa](#) was able to create space for animals thanks to generous support from Community Veterinary Outreach, VCA Canada, and Humane Canada (formerly the Canadian Federation of Humane Societies), plus other donors.

The pet housing area, located in a renovated area of the shelter's basement to address residents' possible allergies and fear of animals, cost \$130,000. The project began when veterinarian Dr. Michelle Lem approached the shelter with the idea. "Providing emergency sheltering of pets with their families will save the lives of both women and their animal companions," said Lem, Community Veterinary Outreach Director. "The Link between animal abuse and intimate partner violence is well established, as well as the harmful effects on children who witness animal abuse."

Highlights of the new facility include:

- To address issues of fear and allergies, pets will stay within the animal housing area only.
- The pet area has: a designated HVAC system for heating, air conditioning and air exchange; its own washer and dryer; and a separate entrance.
- The animal housing area is also soundproofed to address potential issues with noise.
- There are separate dog, cat and small animal housing areas with day and moon lighting.
- An exercise yard for the animals features benches, open space and good lighting.
- VCA Canada will provide health checks on all incoming animals at no charge.



Michelle Lem



To ensure the ongoing success of the project and to gather data, Interval House of Ottawa will be tracking the number of families entering into the shelter with pets, along with the number and type of animals in residence, using the Women in Safe Housing database. Interval House will also assess obstacles encountered, resident and staff satisfaction, legal issues that arise, and community reaction.

The Interval House team, plus its partners and funders, hope to be able to replicate this project across Canada. To help with this goal, an Escaping Violence Together Start-up Guide is being developed, which will be shared nationally at no charge. Currently, there is no such guide in Canada as there is in the U.S. with the [Sheltering Animals and Families Together™ \(SAF-T\) Start-Up Guide](#).

The Canadian manual will include information and advice on getting started, housing models, policies and procedures, financial considerations, legal issues, getting the word out, and working with municipalities. It will also include forms, references and resources.

According to [SAF-T](#), the only other pet-friendly shelter in Canada is in Atikokan, Ont., an 18-hour drive of 1,021 miles. There are 119 co-sheltering facilities in the U.S., plus seven in Australia, New Zealand and the Netherlands.

Tails From the Front

Derek deLouche, Acting CEO of Humane Canada (formerly the Canadian Federation of Humane Societies) helped promote the opening of the new co-sheltering facilities, which it sponsored. Given the barriers to leaving caused by the scarcity of pet-friendly domestic violence shelters in Canada, DeLouche explained the significance of this new program:



"As professionals working to address violence against people and animals, we know that when there is one form of violence in the home, everyone is at risk – including pets. When women with pets consider fleeing abusive homes and there is no safe place to house their animals, they have very few choices:

- Remain in their homes where they, their children and their pets are subjected to continued violence
- Leave their pets behind, uncertain about their safety
- Choose to separate from their pets

"It is important to understand the bond between women, children and their pets, and how much joy and comfort they bring. We know that pets provide emotional and psychological benefits by reducing stress, anxiety, loneliness and isolation. They increase women's ability to handle difficult situations and trauma and are seen as important sources of non-judgmental social support."

Meanwhile, Interval House of Ottawa shared a first-person account of a resident and her pet:



Jennifer struggled at Interval House of Ottawa without the emotional support provided by Daisy, her 14-year-old golden retriever. "Daisy is my life," says Jennifer. "She's everything to me. Some women choose to have pets instead of children and you worry about their safety as others would worry about their children."

Jennifer made the decision to leave her abuser when "he started hurting Daisy as a way of hurting me," but could not bring Daisy into a shelter. She was fortunate enough to place Daisy in foster care for the duration of her stay at Interval House of Ottawa — six months — but she was not allowed to see Daisy during that time.

"There was no one to lick away my tears and bring me toys. I had difficulty coping," Jennifer says of her time without her companion. "It affected my sleep, not having Daisy as my comfort." Instead, Jennifer watched videos of Daisy that she filmed when preparing to leave her violent relationship.

Jennifer believes that a program for women to bring pets into shelter would enable more women to leave abuse.

Protesters Target Sexual Abuse at Spain's Running of the Bulls



While the annual “running of the bulls” at the San Fermin festival in Pamplona, Spain, has long been a target of animal welfare advocates, protests at the 2018 event added a new dimension by also addressing sexual abuse. Sexual assaults during the raucous, alcohol-fueled nine-day festival increased from two in 2008 to 22 in 2017.

A particularly brutal assault in 2016 by five men who filmed themselves sexually attacking a woman marked a tipping point that helped galvanize Spain’s MeToo movement, according to [Time Magazine](#). The men were cleared of rape charges and sentenced to nine years on lesser charges of

sexual abuse but were released on bail this summer.

Despite widespread efforts to ban bullfighting in Spain – which is protected under the Spanish constitution as a cultural heritage – local residents in Pamplona see the festival as central to their community image and economy but fear the community will also get an unfavorable reputation as a place where sexual assault is tolerated.



Nevada Lawyers Learn About the PAWS Act

Awareness of the PAWS (Pet And Women Safety) Act, the bill in the U.S. Congress that would extend pet coverage in domestic violence protection-from-abuse orders across state lines and dedicate \$3 million to help domestic violence shelters to become pet-friendly, was expanded in Nevada recently. Jennifer L. Braster, a founding member of the Animal Law Section of the State Bar of Nevada, published an article in the [May 2017 issue](#) of *Nevada Lawyer*.

Braster described the need for the PAWS Act particularly in states like Nevada, which have only limited numbers of shelters which accept survivors’ pets. Noah’s Animal House at Shade Tree, in Las Vegas, has partnered with the Committee to Aid Abused Women to open a second facility in Reno. Nevada Sen. Dean Heller is one of the bipartisan co-sponsors of the measure. Nevada enacted pet-protection legislation in 2007 and is also one of only nine states that define domestic violence to include the injury or killing of an animal.

“The PAWS Act provides national protections for victims and their pets,” she wrote. “Hopefully this time – with all paws on deck – [the bill] will pass, affording protections to domestic violence victims and their pets on a national level.”

-- Braster, J.L. (2017). PAWS Act: Protecting domestic violence victims and their pets on a national level. *Nevada Lawyer*, 25(5), 16-18.

BUILDING LINK AWARENESS

Massachusetts Prosecutors Learn About Animal Abuse

Norfolk County Assistant District Attorney Tracey Cusick (left) presented a one-hour seminar on Prosecuting Animal Cruelty Cases at the Massachusetts District Attorneys Association's 2018 conference in Boston in May. Introduced by Norfolk District Attorney Michael W. Morrissey (right), Cusick gave an overview of animal cruelty prosecutions to hundreds of prosecutors and distributed a handbook of Massachusetts cases and statutes pertaining to animal cruelty developed by Cusick and other members of Morrissey's office.



Link Subjects Featured at Veterinary Social Work Summit



The [5th International Veterinary Social Work Summit](#) at the University of Tennessee in Knoxville, Oct. 4-6, is including an extensive track on the Link between human and animal abuse.

The Summit, whose overall theme is "Animals and Poverty: How Poverty Impacts the Human-Animal Relationship," attracts hundreds of participants and dozens of speakers from around the world who consider the human side of veterinary medicine and the animal side of social work. Other tracks at the Summit include animal-assisted interventions, grief and bereavement, and compassion fatigue and conflict management.

Link speakers include:

- **Phil Arkow:** "Who 'Ya Gonna Call? Abuse Busters!"
- **Colleen Doherty:** "Inter-Agency Collaboration to Improve Animal and Community Welfare"
- **Michelle Lem and Erin Wasson:** "Promising Practices in Assessment: The Companion Animal Risk Assessment Tool."
- **Amanda Molé:** "Anyone Can Be a Victim: Companion Animals at the Intersection of Domestic Violence and Poverty"
- **Stephany Monsalve and Janaina Hammerschmidt:** "Determinants of Abuse of Dogs and Cats in the Family Environment"
- **Bethanie Poe:** "The Role of Animal Welfare Professionals in Responding to Family Violence"

THE LINK AND... VETERINARY MEDICINE

Cornell Veterinary Pathologist Spotlighted for Solving Crimes

"Recognition of the link between human and animal abuse has helped spur a slowly growing system for investigating and prosecuting crimes against animals."



With that as an introduction, the [Cornell Chronicle](#), the official news source for Cornell University, profiled veterinary pathologist Sean McDonough, whose necropsies have revealed truth, served justice for animals, and helped secure convictions in animal cruelty cases. In the past year, 151 necropsies performed by Cornell's veterinary pathologists had legal implications.

The article cited a case where a 12-year-old girl witnessed a man kick a kitten to death. He claimed the kitten had fallen from a tree and died and he was merely moving it out of the way. McDonough testified that the cat's injuries were inconsistent with a high-rise fall. The jury convicted the man and the judge sentenced him to

Sean McDonough
two years in prison – on felony animal abuse and for committing the act in the presence of a minor.

"Starting in the early 1980s, experts pointed to a strong link between harming animals and human violence, which has raised the stakes for pursuing animal abuse crimes," the article noted. Today, eight pathologists in Cornell's Animal Health Diagnostic Center help district attorneys across the state decide if cases warrant prosecution and, if so, whether the injuries resulted from neglect or intent, which can mean the difference between a misdemeanor and a felony.

"Being able to call Cornell and just ask, 'What does this mean? How do I explain this to a judge or jury in terms that they can understand?' This is extremely helpful," said Nassau County Assistant District Attorney Carissa Danesi.

Cornell attributes the increase in the number of forensic cases the center receives, in part, to growing awareness of the relationship between animal abuse and crimes against humans.

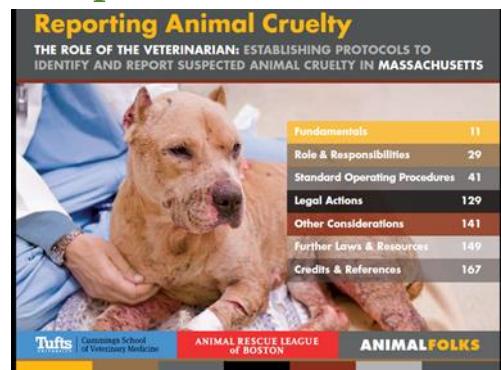
"The truth of the matter is, if you look at just about every single mass murderer, it starts out with harming a vulnerable little animal. And there are studies that indicate people who are harming animals in a home, they are also harming their children and they are harming their spouses," said P. David Soares, Albany County District Attorney. "An individual who would prey on a vulnerable animal is also preying on vulnerable people."

Recognition of this link between human and animal abuse has highlighted the societal importance of seeking justice against those who commit crimes against animals. It has helped spur a growing system for investigating and prosecuting these crimes. Many law enforcement departments offer trainings to police on identifying potential acts of animal cruelty. District attorneys are assigning investigators dedicated to animal crimes. Veterinarians are being trained in forensics. And staff in animal shelters have their ears and eyes tuned to spot abuse and report cases when they see something suspicious.

"I don't know if it's necessarily happening more, but I do think there's more awareness and more reporting," Danesi said, of crimes against animals.

Manual Helps Massachusetts Veterinarians Respond to Animal Abuse

A third manual to help veterinarians work through the challenges of recognizing, reporting and testifying about suspected animal abuse has been published. Building upon the template created by Animal Folks for veterinarians in Minnesota (*See the April 2016 LINK-Letter*), later adapted by the Kirkpatrick Foundation for use in Oklahoma (*See the April 2018 LINK-Letter*), the Animal Rescue League of Boston and the Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine at Tufts University have collaborated to produce an adaptation for practitioners in Massachusetts.



Reporting Animal Cruelty, The Role of the Veterinarian: Establishing Protocols to Identify and Report Suspected Animal Cruelty in Massachusetts is a 180-page manual, richly illustrated with photographs of cruelty cases and forensic procedures. The manual provides an explanation of Massachusetts law and supporting materials so that veterinarians can develop protocols for their clinic or practice to guide the reporting of cases of animal neglect, cruelty, and abuse.

The manual, two years in development, is intended to strengthen the capacity of all who encounter animal cruelty to document and report this serious crime. The collaborators note, however, that many of the images are quite graphic and may be disturbing to some members of the general public.

The Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine plans to distribute the manual to their students and alumni. The Massachusetts Veterinary Medical Association intends to make it available to its membership. The [manual can be downloaded](#) from the Animal Rescue League of Boston's website.

Additional funding for the project was provided by the ASPCA.

The manual includes sections on the fundamentals of animal abuse; the veterinarian's role and responsibilities; standard operating procedures for establishing a protocol in the practice; an explanation of legal procedures and court testimony; and such other issues as immunity and liability, client confidentiality, compensation, and responding to press and social media. A digest of Massachusetts laws and other resources provide further assistance.

Mary Nee, President of the Animal Rescue League of Boston, notes that the publication will be a work-in-progress, intended to be revised as laws and procedures change. The manual emphasizes The Link between animal abuse and human violence and the practitioner's role in being as responsive to animal abuse as are pediatricians in preventing crimes against children.



The Massachusetts veterinarians' manual is the third iteration of this guidance, based upon the Minnesota template (left). It has also been adapted for use in Oklahoma (right).

Paper Explores Link Knowledge Among Veterinarians in Poland



A new paper is taking what is believed to be the first look at the attitudes of veterinarians in Poland towards animal abuse and its Link with domestic violence. Michal Piotr Pregowski, assistant professor of social sciences at Warsaw University of Technology, interviewed 19 veterinarians.

Citing similar research and policies which, to date, are only from the U.S., Canada, U.K., Australia, New Zealand, and the Netherlands, he notes that “witnessing animal abuse and neglect in veterinary practice is clearly a cross-cultural experience. However, the body of research and professional actions related to this topic can be seen as culturally limited.”

Michał Piotr Pregowski

The interviews revealed that:

- Polish veterinarians do not see physical animal abuse frequently, but all interviewees had encountered animal neglect. In many cases, those who bring abused animals to a clinic are not related to the perpetrators but are people who found the victims and wanted to help them.
- Half of the respondents had seen pets that were abused by children, sometimes in the veterinary clinic. Most of these cases, he emphasizes, “can be classified as unintentional abuse caused by the ignorance of both children and parents and the irresponsibility of the grown-ups.”
- The respondents notified local authorities when animal abuse was suspected, primarily because they felt it was their moral obligation to do so.
- Interviewees did not have detailed knowledge of regulations concerning their role in reporting animal abuse and had only cursory knowledge of The Link between animal and human abuse, which they called “probable and logical” upon hearing the interviewer explain the phenomenon. This theme of not knowing “indicates a need for education and clarification among Polish veterinarians, as some of them may be confused about their legal and professional obligations.”
- Levels of cooperation with law enforcement were low and marked by frustration regarding the police’s knowledge, efficiency and attitude. Such “suboptimal cooperation with the police” paints a picture “of the animal abuse cause being hampered by systemic deficiencies.”

He explores the idea that it may be easier for veterinarians to diagnose neglect than abuse, as neglect is readily seen as a medical issue “that is, for the most part, easy for the veterinarian to handle” and “within their competence frame”; moreover, advising and instructing clients about neglect is socially acceptable and contextually expected, since clients come to their veterinarian for help and advice. Responding to active abuse, however, is more problematic, requiring additional diagnostic and interpersonal skills. These issues could be corrected, he argues, through additional training about animal abuse and The Link in obligatory animal welfare-oriented courses for freshmen veterinary students.

Pregowski argues that veterinarians could become “opinion leaders” with an educative role in promoting animal welfare through client interactions. He calls for guidelines to be developed to assist veterinarians in responding to cross-species violence.

“In relation to animal abuse, local veterinarians are mostly left on their own, without institutional guidance, and without proper education about abuse at the university level,” he concludes. “The long-term efficiency of dealing with animal abuse in Poland would be helped greatly through systemic improvements, even if implemented one at a time.”

DVM Says Reporting Animal Cruelty Helps People as Well



A veterinarian in Elkins, W. Va. has told local news media about his willingness to report suspected animal abuse to law enforcement, saying that animal cruelty occurs in small communities more often than most people think and that reporting these cases helps people as well as animals. Jay Adams told [WBOY-TV](#) that even in rural Randolph County, small- and large-scale cruelty incidents occur five or six times a year, and even more situations go unreported.

"When I work on these cases, I'm doing everything I can to help out the animal and help out the people involved," he said. "I think the law does a really good job, not only protecting animals but protecting people involved, as well. What all this comes down to is the human-animal bond. Though our animal friends are always the center of these cases, we can't forget about the people involved, as well."

Canadian Manual Guides DVMs Working on Animal Cruelty Cases

The British Columbia SPCA in Canada has published an extensive 113-page manual to guide veterinarians, staff and volunteers in the identification, documentation, investigation, and courtroom testimony involved with animal cruelty cases.

The [Handbook for Veterinarians Assisting with BC SPCA Cruelty Cases](#) describes: the process by which people can report cruelty to the SPCA; the SPCA's legal authority; eight steps that veterinarians should take during the investigation; procedures for removing animals and follow-up actions; and techniques for effective courtroom procedure if the veterinarian is called to testify.



Emilia Gordon

The Handbook also describes the SPCA's shelter medicine protocols and practices for dealing with the medical conditions most commonly encountered in animal cruelty and hoarding cases. A collection of 19 appendices describe such topics as forensic entomology, standards of care for reptiles, body condition scoring for various species, medical and dental decision-making trees, pain scale assessments, and a variety of forms.

Our thanks to Dr. Emilia Gordon, Senior Manager of Animal Health at the BC SPCA, for sharing this Handbook with us!

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

NEWS FROM LOCAL LINK COALITIONS

Helen Holmquist-Johnson Named to National Steering Committee



The National Link Coalition is pleased to announce the appointment of Helen Holmquist-Johnson, MSW, Ph.D., to our multidisciplinary steering committee. Helen, a native of Fort Collins, Colo., earned her bachelor's degree at the University of Wyoming and her MSW and Ph.D. at Colorado State University, where she serves in the School of Social Work as the Director of Human-Animal Bond in Colorado ([HABIC](#)). She teaches courses in the human-animal bond and animal-assisted therapy and worked for nine years in the Social Work Research Center, evaluating human services and child abuse prevention initiatives.

Helen is the founding president of Colorado Evaluation Network and has an extensive background in nonprofit administration including Animal House Rescue and Grooming, United Way of Larimer County, Host Home, Elderhaus Adult Day Care, and the American Cancer Society.

Helen Holmquist-Johnson

Host Home, Elderhaus Adult Day Care, and the American Cancer Society.

Oklahoma Link Coalition is Spreading the Word!

The Oklahoma Link Coalition garnered significant publicity about in July. Coordinator Kathleen Romero shared with *The Link-Letter* the results of her press release which was picked up by Tulsa's CBS affiliate [KOTV](#) and the [Miami News-Record](#).



OKLAHOMA LINK COALITION

The release urged communities to take animal abuse more seriously and cited cases that "show the clear link between animal cruelty and escalating acts of violence against other members of a family or community":

- In Craig County, a man with a history of violence and domestic abuse is accused of violently stabbing a female postal worker's two dogs in the chest and leaving their dead bodies by the post office front door, after killing his own dog with a claw hammer, frightening his live-in girlfriend to the point that she called law enforcement to seek assistance in fleeing the violence.
- Craig County Sheriff's Office Investigator Frank Miller also cited a recent case in which a man with a history of violence toward his wife, child, and disabled family members, killed cats in front of his wife and child as a way to threaten and control them.
- An Oklahoma County man charged in 2015 with felony animal cruelty after violently beating his dog struck his partner multiple times in 2018 while she was holding their infant daughter. He has been charged with domestic assault and domestic abuse in the presence of a minor.

Romero noted that the Ottawa County Sheriff's Office started a specialized animal crimes unit in 2017, citing The Link as a significant reason, and that awareness of the Link between animal and human violence has prompted several Oklahoma courts to impose stiffer sentences for cruelty offenders.

Miller also referenced a case where more than a dozen dead and several severely malnourished dogs were found at a home where sexual abuse of a child had also occurred. "If we can see a pattern of animal abuse at an early stage then we can correct that before it becomes a major problem," Ottawa County Sheriff Jeremy Floyd told KOTV.

Link-Italia Presents in Parliament, Publishes Sentencing Guidelines



Our Link affiliate in Italy, [Link-Italia](#) (*See the June 2017 LINK-Letter*) was invited on July 18 to present “The Link, or the Social Dangerousness of Animal Abuse” at a dedicated hearing in the Italian Parliament’s Intergroup for Animal Rights. Link-Italia founder Francesca Sorcinelli tells *The LINK-Letter* that the presentation is an important signal from Italian politicians that The Link is not just a theoretical assumption but rather is based on rigorous scientific principles.

Link-Italia has also published additional materials in its groundbreaking “Zooanthropology of Deviance” research. In April, the organization published “*Zooantropologia della Devianza:Introduzione alle linee guida in materia di determinazione della pena sospensione condizionale della pena messa alla prova nei procedimenti penali per maltrattamento e/o uccisione di animali e/o altre ipotesi di reato contro gli animali*” (Zooanthropology of Deviance: Introduction to the Guidelines on the Determination of the Conditional Suspension of the Sentence in Criminal Proceedings for Mistreatment and/or Killing of Animals and/or Other Offenses Against Animals.) The guidelines emphasize that animal abuse harms people and is a danger to society as well as an offense against animals.

THE LINK ... IN THE LITERATURE



Jeff Fink and friend

Understanding The Link Can Help Survivors

While the recent #metoo campaign has highlighted how common physical and sexual violence is for millions of women in the United States, Link research is demonstrating that animals are not only present in violent households, but they too are often victims alongside other vulnerable family members. Writing in a [blog](#) for the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services’ Office on Women’s Health, Jeff Fink notes that

understanding the connection between animal abuse and domestic violence can help survivors in a very real, immediate way. Fink, founder of [Go Fetch Wellness](#), describes why many survivors stay trapped in abusive situations in fear for their animals’ welfare. “Abusers realize the emotional bond between people and their pets and use this to assert coercive control over their victims, often threatening violence to the family pet to keep their partner under their control,” he writes. “Unfortunately, this often works.”

Fink encourages mental health professionals to include assessment questions about family pets to identify abuse, whether targeted at animals and/or people, to help survivors overcome the stigma, guilt, fear, and shame they may be experiencing, since survivors may be more likely to share information about the abuse of their animals before indicating that they, too, are victims.

-- Fink, J. (2017, Nov.7). *The Link: Domestic violence and animal abuse.*
Washington, DC: Office on Women’s Health.

Social Work Research/Teaching Positions Available in Human-Animal Interactions

The Colorado State University School of Social Work is inviting applications for up to two faculty positions at the assistant (tenure-track) rank to begin January 2019 or August 2019.

Applicants are sought with expertise in behavioral health (mental health, alcohol, and drug prevention/treatment), human-animal interventions, aging, health/well-being, child welfare, or social justice which enhance the university's research strengths. Applicants should have a personal and professional commitment to diversity and social justice.

Candidates must have a doctoral degree in social work or a related discipline; demonstrated ability to conduct impactful scholarly research and publish in peer-reviewed venues; an active and well-articulated research agenda coupled with interest and ability to secure external grant funding; ability to teach at the BSW, MSW, and/or PhD levels; and to advise MSW research projects and/or doctoral dissertations. In order to teach practice classes, applicants must have an MSW degree and a minimum of two years post-master's professional practice experience.

Applications must be submitted by Aug. 31 to the [CSU website](#).

ANIMAL ABUSE AND... ELDER ABUSE

Research-to-Practice Brief Helps APS Personnel

The National Link Coalition has partnered with the National Adult Protective Services Association (NAPSA) to produce a ["Research-to-Practice" brief](#) to help APS officials understand the research underlying The Link between animal and elder abuse and, more importantly, how it impacts their day-to-day work.



National Adult
Protective Services
Association

The brief describes "Elder Abuse and Animal Abuse: Implications and Strategies for Adult Protective Services." It is the newest inclusion in a series of 30 NAPSA briefs which link cutting-edge research with everyday practice. The two-page brief serves as a summary of research, including: how animal abuse and neglect are indicators of other criminal and social services issues; how elders are susceptible to pet neglect, self-neglect, coercive control, and financial exploitation involving their animals; how delivery of services may be compromised due to animal-related issues; and how service animals may complicate interventions for APS caseworkers.

The brief lists numerous recommendations for APS agencies, including: adding questions about pets in hotlines, intakes, interviews, and assessments; establishing a policy for dealing with animal abuse and MOUs with area animal shelters; identifying pet-friendly housing when planning for clients' transitions; treating clients' pet loss and grief as serious emotional concerns; and promoting laws mandating cross reporting between animal care and control and APS officials.

THE LINK... IN THE LEGISLATURES

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

Although the 2018 legislative season has concluded in many states, we are still following many bills, many of which are predicated upon how animal abuse and interpersonal violence are LINKed. We are encouraged by this progress and hope to see even more LINK legislation passed in legislatures that are still in session!

Domestic Violence/Pet Protection Orders



After languishing in both the 114th and 115th Congresses despite having over 280 co-sponsors in the House and Senate, **H.R. 909 and S.322 – the Pet And Women Safety (PAWS) Act** – was tacked on to **H.R. 2 – the Farm Bill** – and was passed by the Senate on June 28 by a 86-11 vote and was transmitted to the House. The measure 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 2023 in grants for shelter and housing assistance for victims with pets, support services to help victims secure safe housing that allows pets, for pet-related services, and for training on The Link between domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking and pet abuse.



California AB 2274 would allow courts to assign sole or joint ownership of a community property pet in divorce and separation agreements by taking into consideration the well-being of the pet. The bill was approved by the House 57-4 and is in the Senate Judiciary Committee.



California AB 1939 would expand provisions of the California Victim Compensation program to allow the costs of temporary housing for the pets of domestic violence victims to be reimbursable as part of relocation expenses. The bill was approved by the Assembly and was sent to the Senate Appropriations Committee.



Colorado law included animals among the property that can be included in a protective order. **Colorado SB 18-060** now will specifically allow courts to issue a protective order prohibiting the taking, transferring, concealing, harming, disposing of, or threatening to harm an animal owned, possessed, leased, kept, or held by the alleged victim or witness. **The bill was signed into law** by Gov. John Hickenlooper on March 22 and will take effect Nov. 1.



Illinois HB5668 would amend the Domestic Violence Shelters Act and require the Department of Human Services to prioritize funding to domestic violence shelters and service programs that provide shelter assistance to victims' pets. The bill is in the Rules Committee.



Kentucky HB 447 would prohibit courts from offering probation, early release or a suspended sentence to offenders convicted of torturing a dog or cat with the intent of threatening, intimidating, coercing, harassing, or terrorizing a family member or person in a dating relationship. Kentucky law defines "family members" as current and former spouses, child or stepchild, grandchild, parent or grandparent. **The bill was in the Judiciary Committee when the legislature adjourned.**



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 1st, 2nd or 3rd-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 was passed the House 90-15, approved by the Senate Judiciary Committee and sent to the full Senate.



Mississippi SB 2232 would have authorized courts to include the protection of pets in the order and require that the respondent not remove, damage, hide, harm or dispose of any companion animal owned by the person protected by the order. **The bill died in the Senate Judiciary Committee.**



Missouri HB 2374 would have added “intimidation,” the coercive, vengeful or punitive injuring, killing or threatening of an animal, as grounds for which a court could issue an order of protection. **The bill was in the Judiciary Committee when the Legislature adjourned.**



New Mexico HJM 3 would have requested that the Department of Children, Youth and Families and the Department of Public Safety consider providing training on the Link between animal abuse and family violence in training delivered to appropriate personnel. The measure was approved by the House and two Senate committees but **further action was postponed indefinitely.**



New York A8663 would have amended §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 was in the Assembly Judiciary Committee when the State Assembly adjourned.**



Ohio HB1 expands the ability of courts to issue protection-from-abuse orders that include animals to individuals seeking protection orders in cases of dating violence. It would allow a court order 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 to remove a companion animal owned by that petitioner from the possession of the respondent. **The bill was signed into law by Gov. John Kasich on April 5.**



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.



Rhode Island H7032 and **S2459** would have permitted family courts to award custody of household pets to the plaintiff in a domestic abuse complaint. **The bills were being held in the House and Senate Judiciary Committees when the General Assembly adjourned.**



Rhode Island HB 7167 would have expanded family court jurisdiction to enter protective orders to provide for the safety and welfare of household pets in domestic abuse situations. **The bill was in the House Judiciary Committee when the General Assembly adjourned.**





Rhode Island HB 7585 would have created a custody procedure for pets in divorce and separation proceedings based on the best interests of the animal. **The bill was being held in the House Judiciary Committee for further study when the General Assembly adjourned.**



West Virginia HB 2855 would have allowed courts to make provisions within a divorce order for the temporary custody and care of pets, including joint custody, allocation of costs and visitation rights for the noncustodial party, taking into consideration the well-being of the animal. **The bill was in the House Judiciary Committee when the legislature adjourned.**

Animal Abuse and Child Maltreatment



Louisiana HB 292 will require courts to allow witnesses who are either under age 18 or developmentally disabled to be accompanied by a facility dog while testifying. Courts will be permitted to allow such facility dogs for any other witnesses. The bill establishes procedures defining facility dogs and their presence in the courtroom. The bill was approved 91-0 by the House and 31-0 by the Senate and **was signed into law** on May 23, taking effect Aug. 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.



The **Michigan Legislature** has approved **HB 5645** that will now allow witnesses of child abuse, child sexual abuse and elder abuse to be accompanied by a trained and evaluated "courtroom support dog." The bill passed the House by a vote of 107-1 and the Senate 36-0 and is scheduled to take effect immediately.



New Jersey A3729 would allow assistance dogs to be used to help facilitate the taking of testimony of victims or witnesses in open court in criminal prosecutions. The bill is in the Assembly Judiciary Committee.



New York S1432 and **A5048** would have criminalized knowingly causing a minor to attend a place where exhibition of animal fighting is being conducted. **S1432** passed the Senate and both bills were in the Assembly Agriculture Committee **when the Legislature adjourned.**



New York S2470 and companion bill **A2140**, and **S728** and companion bill **A3845**, would have increased penalties for aggravated animal cruelty committed in the presence of a child. **The 4 bills all expired when the State Assembly adjourned.**

"CASA for Animals"



Michigan HB 6029 would allow courts to appoint an advocate to represent the interests of an animal in criminal proceedings. The bill is in the House Agriculture Committee.



New York A9701 would have allowed a court to order a separate advocate be appointed to represent the interests of justice in animal welfare proceedings. **The bill was in the Judiciary Committee when the Assembly adjourned.**

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 Senate version passed unanimously and is in the House Judiciary Committee.



Alabama law prohibits the dissemination, display and possession of obscene material including child pornography and bestiality. **SB 35** would have clarified the definition of dissemination by removing the requirement of monetary consideration and would have added sharing or trading such visual depictions. **The bill was in the Senate Judiciary Committee when the legislature adjourned.**



California AB 3040 would address the state’s bestiality law. Existing law makes it a misdemeanor to sexually assault certain animals to gratify a person’s sexual desires. The bill would prohibit sexual contact with any animal punishable as a misdemeanor; such animals could be seized. Veterinarians would be mandated to report suspected animal sexual abuse with immunity from civil liability, as they currently are for reporting animal abuse. The bill was approved 73-0 by the Assembly and is in the Senate Committee on Appropriations.



Hawai'i SB 2289 would have created a new crime of sexual assault of an animal as a Class C felony, or a Class B felony if committed in the presence of a minor, and order forfeiture of all animals; prohibit living, working or volunteering with animals for five years; and require psychological or psychiatric counseling or treatment. **The bill died in the Senate Judiciary Committee.**



Kentucky SB 239 would establish the crime of sexual activity with animals as a Class A misdemeanor. **It was in the Senate Agriculture Committee when the legislature adjourned.**



Louisiana SB 236 updates the current statute, replacing what was called a “crime against nature” with the new crime of “sexual abuse of an animal” with enhanced penalties and provisions for removal of the animal, psychological evaluation for sex offenders, and prohibitions against living, working or volunteering with animals for five years or more. **The bill was signed into law** on May 25 by Gov. John Bel Edwards and became effective immediately.



Maryland HB 1134 and **SB 800** would have replaced the archaic terms “sodomy,” “bestiality” and “unnatural or perverted sexual practices” with the more contemporary “sexual activity with an animal” and prohibit a wide range of activities designed to promote, coerce, observe, or abet such practices. Convicted offenders would have been barred from owning, residing with, or coming into contact with an animal for 30 years. **HB 1134** passed the House and joined **SB 800** in the Senate Judiciary Committee, but **both bills received an unfavorable report and died when the legislature adjourned.**



Massachusetts S.2347 (with amendment H.4565) would update existing statutes prohibiting the archaic terminology of the “abominable and detestable crime against nature.” The new measure would prohibit “sexual contact with animals”; obtaining an animal with the intent to use it for sexual contact; organizing, participating, or promoting sexual contact with an animal; and disseminating photos or videos of sexual contact with animals. The bill also would establish **Cross-Reporting** among child, elder and animal abuse personnel and affect **Animal Abuse and Other Crimes**. The bill passed the Senate 36-0 and the House 147-0 and is in a Conference 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 was included in a Study Order by the Joint Committee on the Judiciary.



Washington SB 6076 would have changed the definition of illegal animal sexual contact to include sexual penetration or touching of the sexual or other intimate parts of an animal by force, intimidation, coercion, or where motivated by sexual arousal, sexual gratification or financial gain. **The bill was in the Law & Justice Committee when the legislature adjourned.**



West Virginia HB 4455 passed the House 96-0 and was sent to the Senate Judiciary Committee, but failed to make it out of committee when the legislature adjourned. The bill would have prohibited sexual abuse of an animal, either by engaging in, aiding or abetting, organizing or promoting, making animals available, or permitting it to be conducted on one's premises. Violations would have been misdemeanors; however, committing animal sexual abuse in the presence of a child, having prior convictions for sex crimes, or causing serious bodily injury or death to the animal would have made offenses a felony. Courts would have been able to order offenders to surrender all animals and pay for their care and maintenance, prohibit ownership or residence with animals for either 5 or 15 years, and order offenders to undergo psychiatric or psychological evaluation to be eligible for probation.



Wisconsin AB 666 and SB 802 would have updated the state's archaic bestiality law and made it a felony to have sexual contact with an animal, to coerce another to have sexual contact with an animal, or to promote, advertise, harbor, transport, or obtain an animal for the purpose of sexual contact. Current law only makes sexual gratification with an animal a misdemeanor and does not include the other provisions. The bill would have also created escalating degrees of felony if the other person is a child. **AB 666 and SB 802** were approved by the Assembly and a Senate Committee but were not allowed to come to a vote in the full Senate.

Animal Hoarding



Florida SB 86 would have defined animal hoarding as keeping a large number of companion animals in overcrowded conditions; failing to provide minimal standards of nutrition, sanitation, shelter and medical care; and failure to acknowledge these conditions and the impact on the well-being of the animals or persons. **The bill died in the Criminal Justice Committee.**



New Jersey S 2242 and A3762 would define animal hoarding as possessing too many animals with inadequate care which leads to death, bodily injury or other serious adverse health consequences, a 4th-degree crime. Courts would be required to order psychological evaluation and counseling for convicted offenders. The bills are in the Senate Environment & Energy Committee and the Assembly Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee.



New York A44 would have created 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 have been required to undergo mental health evaluation and may be required to undergo counseling and be prohibited from owning animals. **The bill was in the Agriculture Committee when the legislature adjourned.**



Rhode Island S2778 would have allowed the Rhode Island state veterinarian, the R.I. SPCA, or any law enforcement officer to seize animals that are “hazardously accumulated” or otherwise abandoned or neglected. **The bill was in the senate Environment & Agriculture Committee when the General Assembly adjourned.**

Psychological Evaluation of Offenders



California SB 1024 would require individuals convicted of any of several animal cruelty offenses to complete and pass a 5-hour course on responsible animal owner education and would allow courts to consider ordering mandatory mental health evaluations for such offenders. The bill's authors noted that current sentencing options for animal abuse crimes are limited and are not particularly well suited to “addressing the underlying causes behind animal abuse as observed by law enforcement, mental health and animal welfare experts. The link between animal abuse and violence towards humans is well documented,” they wrote. Citing the Parkland, Fla. school shootings and cases of child abuse and domestic violence, they added that “mental health intervention early is the key to stopping this progression and escalation of violent behavior.” The bill was approved by the Senate and was sent to the Assembly Appropriations Committee.



Iowa SF 2181/HF 2468 would have allowed courts to require adult animal cruelty offenders to undergo psychiatric or psychological evaluation and treatment and mandate such provisions for juveniles and individuals convicted of animal torture, abandonment, endangerment, or aggravated cruelty. **The bills were in committee when the Legislature adjourned.**



Maryland HB 1629 would have allowed a court to order psychological counseling for a defendant convicted of an animal abuse crime. The bill **died when the legislature adjourned.**



Mississippi SB 2172 would have allowed courts to order persons convicted of aggravated cruelty to receive a psychiatric or psychological examination and counseling or treatment. **The bill died in the Senate Agriculture and Judiciary Committees.**



Missouri HB 2359 would have allowed courts to impose psychological or psychiatric evaluation and treatment upon convicted animal cruelty offenders. **The bill was in the Crime Prevention & Public Safety Committee when the Legislature adjourned.**



New Jersey law currently requires juveniles (but not adults) convicted of animal cruelty to undergo mental health counseling. **A3049** and **S 1636** would require a mental health evaluation for juvenile and adult animal cruelty offenders, to be followed by mental health counseling if warranted by the evaluation. The bills are in the Assembly Agriculture & Natural Resources Committee and the Senate Health, Human Services & Senior Citizens Committee. **A3856** and **S2165** would require both juveniles and adults to undergo mental health counseling; those bills are in the Assembly Agriculture & Natural Resources Committee and the Senate Economic Growth Committee.



Existing **Virginia** law permits courts to impose anger management or other appropriate treatment programs, or obtain psychiatric or psychological counseling, upon animal cruelty offenders. **HB 425** would have made such provisions mandatory unless the court finds that the person presents no current or future likelihood of repeating the violation or causing harm to himself or others. **The bill was tabled indefinitely in the Committee on Agriculture, Chesapeake & Natural Resources.**

Cross-Reporting



Indiana SB 332 and companion bill **HB 1261** ("Protecting pets in distressed homes") would have required Adult Protective Services employees conducting assessments or investigations who have reason to believe an animal is a victim of cruelty, abandonment or neglect to make a report to a law enforcement or animal control agency, with immunity from civil and criminal liability. **The bills died in their respective committees.**



Indiana SB 431 gives APS and CPS workers who observe suspected animal cruelty, abandonment or abuse while conducting an assessment or investigation immunity from civil and criminal liability if they report it to law enforcement or animal control. **The bill was signed into law** on March 15 and became effective July 1, 2018.



Iowa HF 2065 and **SF 129** would have required veterinarians to report any conclusion of animal cruelty to the local law enforcement agency, with immunity from civil and criminal liability. It would also have required law enforcement agencies investigating animal cruelty complaints to file a child endangerment report with the Department of Human Services if a minor child witnessed the abuse. The bill also increased penalties for various animal abuse offenses including committing animal torture in the presence of a child, and allow courts to ban offenders' ownership of animals. The measure would also have allowed courts to impose psychological or psychiatric evaluation and treatment upon convicted offenders; such orders would have been mandatory for juvenile offenders. **The bills were in their respective Agriculture Committees when the Legislature adjourned.**



Kansas HB2530 would have added animal control officers to professionals who are mandated to report suspected abuse or neglect of children and vulnerable adults. The bill was approved by the Committee on Children and Seniors and **the provision was deleted by the House.**



Massachusetts S.295 in the Education Committee would make domestic violence workers, animal control officers and humane officers mandated reporters of child sexual abuse. The bill is in the Senate Education Committee where it accompanied a Study Order.



Massachusetts S.2347 (with amendment H.4565) would permit 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 to a police officer or special state police officer. The bill would permit animal control officers to report suspected child abuse, elder abuse and abuse against disabled persons. Individuals who report in good faith would be immune from civil and criminal liability; confidentiality requirements would not prohibit an individual from making a report. A special commission would be appointed to study the feasibility of mandating these cross-reports. The bill would also affect *Animal Abuse and Other Crimes* and *Animal Sexual Abuse*. The bill passed the Senate 36-0 and the House 147-0 and is in a Conference Committee.



Michigan HB 4441 would amend the Child Protection Law to add animal control officers as mandated reporters of 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, 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 intentional false reporting of animal abuse a felony. The bills are in the Judiciary Committee.



Minnesota veterinarians are mandated to report suspected animal cruelty to peace officers, humane agents or animal control officers. **HF 787** and **SF1167** would have given them immunity from civil liability. **HF 787 died in the Agriculture Policy Committee and SF1167 died in the Agriculture, Rural Development & Housing Policy Committee when the legislature adjourned.**



Mississippi SB 2172 would have required law enforcement officers investigating animal abuse cases to utilize a uniform form to conform with the FBI's National Incident Based Reporting System. The bill would also have enhanced penalties for animal cruelty and require youths convicted of aggravated cruelty to a dog or cat to undergo psychiatric or psychological evaluation. **The bill died in committee.**



Missouri HB 2359 would have granted veterinarians, teachers and school personnel immunity from civil liability for reporting animal abuse in good faith to law enforcement agencies. **The bill was in the Crime Prevention & Public Safety Committee when the Legislature adjourned.**



New York S621 and **A4904** would have required veterinarians to report suspected animal cruelty and to turn over necessary records. New York veterinarians are currently permitted but are not required to report. **The bills were in committee when the legislature adjourned.**



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.



Ohio HB 523 would mandate veterinarians, child protective services, and counselors, social workers and marriage and family therapists to report suspected animal abuse, with immunity from liability for good-faith reporting, if a child or older adult resides with the alleged violator. Dog wardens and animal control officers would be required to report suspected child abuse. Military family advocacy programs would have to be notified when military personnel are investigated for child maltreatment or domestic violence. Fines collected from civil penalties for violating pet protective orders would be used to fund shelter and support programs for the animals belonging to victims of domestic violence. The bill was approved by the Community & Family Advancement 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 was laid on the table in the Senate Judiciary Committee.



Rhode Island veterinarians have immunity from civil and criminal liability for good-faith reporting of suspected animal abuse, neglect or abandonment. **H 7986** extends this immunity to include veterinary technicians and animal shelter and kennel employees. Reports are to be made to local or state police, animal control officers or humane organizations. Failure to report is punishable by a fine of up to \$500. The reporter is not obligated to further investigate the alleged abuse. **The bill was signed into law by Gov. Gina Raimondo on July 2.**



West Virginia HB 4014 would have required adult protective services workers to report reasonable suspicions of animal abuse or cruelty to the county humane officer within 24 hours, and humane officers to immediately report suspected abuse, neglect or emergencies affecting an incapacitated adult or facility resident. The provisions were part of a larger reorganization of the Department of Health & Human Resources and **did not survive the committee amendment process.**

Animal Abuse and Other Crimes



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



Hawai'i SB 2014 would have created a registry of animal cruelty offenders based upon the premise that because “acts of cruelty to one animal has been linked to cruelty to other animals and violence against humans, it is necessary to ensure that persons convicted of cruelty to animals are restricted from interacting with animals.” **The bill was in the Senate Judiciary and Ways & Means Committees when the Legislature adjourned.**



Massachusetts S.2347 (with amendment H.4565) 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-Reporting* among child, elder and animal abuse personnel and affect *Animal Sexual Abuse*. The bill passed the Senate and House and is in a Conference Committee.



New Jersey A3693 and **S2239** would add individuals convicted of animal cruelty to the list of offenders of other crimes who are prohibited from possessing a firearm and obtaining a permit to purchase a handgun. The bills are in the Assembly Judiciary and Senate Law & Public Safety Committees.



New York S1680 and companion bill **A3038** would have expanded the definition of aggravated cruelty to animals to include harm to animals during the commission of a felony. **S1680** passed the Senate and was sent to the Assembly Codes Committee; **A3038** was also in the Codes Committee. **The bills expired when the State Assembly adjourned.**



New York S251 would have expanded animal fighting prohibitions to criminalize promoting, attending, facilitating, training, breeding or selling fighting animals, or selling, manufacturing or owning animal fighting paraphernalia. **The bill was in the Agriculture Committee when the State Assembly adjourned.**

THE LINK... IN THE NEWS



Fiancé Gets 25 Years for Choking Woman and Killing Her Puppy

Dusten Blake Ward, 24, of Rogers, Ark., was sentenced on June 19 to 25 years in prison after pleading guilty to choking his fiancée and killing her puppy. Ward had been charged with domestic abuse and animal cruelty stemming from an incident in which he choked the woman, smashed her head to the floor and beat her with a metal pipe in an argument over the puppy. He then beat the 11-week-old dog,

Dusten Blake Ward named “Dez,” repeatedly with a metal pipe, killing it, according to [KFSM-TV](#). Benton County Circuit Judge Brad Karren imposed the stiff sentence after Ward was charged as a habitual offender. The woman had recently put out a desperate plea on social media asking for someone to adopt Dez, saying, “I can no longer keep him due to danger in the house... and I need him gone quick.”

Daughter’s Ex-Boyfriend Gets 2 Years for Strangling Dog

Terri Brewer, of Clifton Park, N.Y., found some measure of justice for her 12-year-old miniature Dobermann pinscher, “Nick,” who was strangled and dumped in the trash by Hank Smith, 26, her daughter’s ex-boyfriend. Smith, charged with aggravated animal cruelty, possession of stolen property and possession of a weapon, pled guilty to the cruelty charge and was sentenced on June 22 to two years in jail. Nick “was my best friend. He was always there for me and my daughters and my grandson,” Brewer told [WRGB-TV](#). Police said that Smith was drinking alcohol at the time and had **Hank Smith** felt that the dog was elderly and needed to be euthanized eventually. “It’s a bridge crime,” said New York State Sen. Jim Tedisco. “It’s tragic, but it’s happening all too often. People who hurt animals in this way go on to hurt people, and that’s why the FBI last year put it up on an A level as an indicator.”



Ex-Con with History of Assault Charged with Animal Cruelty and Sexual Assault

A Nova Scotia man who previously served six months in jail for assaulting a former girlfriend on three occasions is facing new charges on multiple counts of sexual assault and animal cruelty. Steven Geza Anda, 29, of Sydney, will stand trial on charges of stabbing a cat and dislocating its leg, five counts of assault, three counts of sexual assault, unlawful confinement, and carrying a weapon dangerous to public peace (a knife and bear mace), according to [news media](#).

Geza pled guilty in 2017 to assault with a deadly weapon (a laptop computer) plus two other assault charges in the attacks on the woman. In the last attack she was packing her bags and leaving the home and the relationship, according to the [Cape Breton Post](#). She told police that Anda had kicked her in the stomach and face with his boots and held a knife to her throat, threatening to cut her if she called the authorities. She suffered a concussion and required five stiches on her head. Authorities said Anda had a history of alcohol abuse and had grown up in a home with alcohol abuse and domestic violence.

Man Charged with Assaulting Two Sisters and Animal Cruelty

An Evansville, Ind. man is facing domestic battery and animal cruelty charges. Police responding to a domestic disturbance charged Marcus Howard, 23, for allegedly beating two sisters and trying to kill a dog. [WFIE-TV](#) reported that police found two women in the apartment bleeding from the head. One sister reported that Howard had attacked her and slammed her new puppy on the ground outside their apartment. The other said he hit her in the head with a pool ball while trying to break up the fight. The puppy was said to be partially paralyzed and unable to walk.



Marcus Howard

Dogfighting/Drug Raid Rescues 7 Children, 15 Dogs

The St. Tammany Parish, La., Sheriff's Office Narcotics Task Force rescued seven children aged 4 to 12, and 15 pit bulls with facial and head lacerations commonly associated with illegal dogfighting, in a raid that also seized 419.7 grams of cocaine, 28 grams of marijuana, \$2,066 in cash plus a money counting machine, and assorted drug paraphernalia. Michael Ratliff and his live-in girlfriend, Antinette Johnson, of Slidell, were booked into custody on multiple charges.

[WVUE-TV](#) reported that St. Tammany Parish Animal Services seized the dogs and that the children were released into the care of family members. Ratliff was charged with 10 counts, and Johnson with eight counts, including animal cruelty, dogfighting, narcotics offenses, obstruction of justice, probation violations, and illegal use of a controlled dangerous substance in the presence of a minor.



Michael Ratliff and Antinette Johnson

Sex Offender Charged with Shooting Two Deer

Oregon State Police arrested sex offender Daniel Logsdon, 36, of Shady Cove, for felony aggravated animal abuse for allegedly shooting two deer with a bow and arrow. Logsdon was also charged with unlawful taking of antlerless deer and failure to report as a sex offender, according to [KVAL-TV](#). The arrows were successfully removed without further injury and the deer were returned to the wild. Police said the incident was not harvesting deer for meat but rather a malicious intent. Logsdon's prior charges include sexual abuse, rape, assault, conspiracy, theft, failure to report as a sex offender, and being a felon in possession of a firearm.



One of the two deer involved

Teacher Gets Near-Maximum Sentence for Child Porn and Bestiality Videos

A former special ed teacher whose collection of over 10,000 images and 3,000 videos of child pornography also included incidents of bestiality was sentenced to 18 years and four months in federal prison on child pornography charges. U.S. District Judge imposed a sentence close to the maximum upon Kirk Patrick Keshler, 61, of Garland, Texas, because the number of images he had was "just preposterous," the [Dallas Morning News](#) reported. Police also found several pairs of girls' panties in various child sizes during a 2017 search of his home. Other videos included scenes of sadism and masochism, including some that involved infants.



Kirk Patrick Keshler



David Wheeler

Husband Charged with Assault and Cruelty in Domestic Dispute

David Wheeler, 71, of Dunedin, Fla., was arrested by Pinellas County Sheriff's deputies who said he threatened to kill his wife and shot their family dog of 15 years during a domestic dispute on the 4th of July. [WFTS-TV](#) reported that Wheeler made threats to kill his wife, pointed a .45 caliber handgun at her and at his son who tried to intervene, and later threatened to shoot himself. After a one-hour standoff, Wheeler was taken into custody and charged with two counts of aggravated domestic assault, one count of aggravated assault on a law enforcement officer, and animal cruelty.

Man Charged with Assaulting Boyfriend, Cruelty to Puppy

A man who was charged with assaulting his boyfriend and holding their dachshund puppy under water was arrested by Wood River, Ill. police. Tavian Snead, 22, is facing counts of aggravated animal cruelty and domestic battery in Madison County Circuit Court, the [St. Louis Post-Dispatch](#) reported. The dog was reportedly recovering at a local animal hospital.

Fiancée's Boyfriend Charged with Shooting Dog that Bit Him

Joel Armendanz, 35, of Las Cruces, N. Mex., was charged with felony extreme animal cruelty for allegedly shooting his fiancée's dog because it bit him. The [Las Cruces Sun-News](#) reported that Armendanz allegedly punched and then shot the 14-year-old Alaskan malamute named "Chance" four times after his 7-year-old son told him the dog had been digging in newly-laid sod. Police said a witness also saw him kicking the dog violently. Authorities said the bite wound was relatively minor.



Joel Armendanz

Deputies Kill Armed Man Suspected of Animal Cruelty and Domestic Abuse

Sheriff's deputies in Sumter County, Fla., reportedly shot and killed a man who had punched and then shot dogs following a domestic dispute with his wife. [The Associated Press](#) reported that a woman told deputies her husband had punched a dog three times in the face and then pushed her. While interviewing the woman on July 20, deputies got reports that a dog had been shot and killed nearby. Capt. Tony Prevatt said that when deputies located Anthony Coleman, 38, of Lady Lake, and asked him to surrender, he raised a handgun toward deputies. They then fired at him. Coleman was airlifted to a hospital in Ocala but died hours later.

LINK TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

Aug. 15 – Philadelphia, Pa.: Phil Arkow will conduct a Link training for the [Pennsylvania Bar Institute](#) Animal Law Conference.

Aug. 22 – Jacksonville, Fla.: Katie Campbell will present on "Domestic Violence and Pets: How RedRover's Expanded Grants Can Support Your Program" at the 44th Annual [NOVA Training Event](#).

Sept. 6 – Buffalo, N.Y.: Phil Arkow will present at the [Buffalo Academy of Veterinary Medicine](#)'s lecture series.

Sept. 9-14 – Aurora, Ill.: "The Relationship of Animal Abuse and Family Violence" will be included in the [National Animal Cruelty Investigations School](#)'s Level III training for Expert investigators.

Sept. 11 (online): John Thompson will conduct a [Justice Clearinghouse](#) webinar on "The Dynamics of Officer Involved Shootings of Dogs" on behalf of the National Sheriffs' Association.

Sept. 12 – Norman, Okla.: Phil Arkow will speak about "The Cruelty Connection: Breaking the Chain of Domestic Violence by Preventing Animal Abuse" at the [Oklahoma Coalition Against Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault](#) Partners for Change conference.

Sept. 14 – Dallas, Texas: Dallas County District Attorney Felicia Kerney will speak to the [North Texas Link Coalition](#).

Sept. 14 – (online): Jane Nathanson, Gary Patronek and Phil Arkow will conduct a [Journal Club](#) webinar on Elder Abuse and Animal Hoarding for the National Adult Protective Services Association.

Sept. 17 – Camden, N.J.: Phil Arkow will provide professional development training on The Link for providers and advocates in the [New Jersey Victim Assistance Academy](#).

Sept. 18 – Saskatoon, Sask., Canada: Leanne Sillers will discuss “Lifting Barriers: How Animal Safekeeping Programs Can Help the Victims of Violence,” and Jessi Rassmussen will present “Supporting the Victims of Domestic Violence in the Workplace,” at the [Saskatchewan SPCA](#)’s 2018 conference.

Sept. 19-20 – Itasca, Ill.: Phil Arkow will present “Animal Abuse, Elder Abuse and Hoarding: Challenges and Strategies for Adult Protective Services” at the [Illinois Department on Aging](#)’s Adult Protection and Advocacy Conference.

Sept. 22-23 – Melbourne, Australia: [Lucy’s Project](#) will hold its conference, “Strategic and Practical Perspectives on Domestic Violence and Animal Abuse, and a continuing education program for veterinarians and veterinary nurses on identifying, responding, risk assessment, management, and referral pathways in non-accidental injuries.

Oct. 4-5 – Knoxville, Tenn.: Phil Arkow will present “Who ‘Ya Gonna Call? Abuse Busters!”; Stephany Monsalve and Janaina Hammerschmidt will present on “Determinants of Abuse of Dogs and Cats in the Family Environment”; Amanda Molé will speak on “Anyone Can Be a Victim: Companion Animals at the Intersection of Domestic Violence and Poverty”; Bethanie Poe will speak on “The Role of Animal Welfare Professionals in Responding to Family Violence”; Colleen Doherty will present “Inter-Agency Collaboration to Improve Animal and Community Welfare”; and Michelle Lem and Erin Wasson will present “Promising Practices in Assessment: The Companion Animal Risk Assessment Tool” In the Link Between Human and Animal Violence track at the 5th International [Veterinary Social Work](#) Summit.

Oct. 5 – Madison, Wis.: Phil Arkow, Diane Balkin and John Thompson will join Wisconsin authorities at [Sheltering Animals of Abuse Victims](#) (S.A.A.V.)’s conference on “The Link between Family Violence and Animal cruelty: A Community-Wide Approach to Breaking the Cycle of Abuse.”

Oct. 10 (online): Phil Arkow will conduct a webinar on “Animal Abuse and Interpersonal Violence” for the [National Organization for Victim Assistance Academy](#).

Oct. 11 – Windsor, Ont., Canada: The University of Windsor Animal and Interpersonal Abuse Research Group, the Windsor-Essex County Humane Society, and Hiatus House will hold an all-day pre-conference [Institute](#) on research, theory and practice specific to the intersection of violence against animals and women within the context of domestic violence.

Oct. 12 – Rochester, N.Y.: Phil Arkow and Lisa Lunghofer will conduct a multi-disciplinary Link training on behalf of the [Humane Society of Greater Rochester](#).

Oct. 12 – Denver, Colo.: Chris Schindler will present “Breaking the Sickest Link: Conducting Effective Bestiality Investigations” at the National Animal Care & Control Association’s [Training Conference](#).

Oct. 17-19 – Plano, Texas: The [Collin County Council on Family Violence](#) will hold its 16th Annual North Texas Families Facing Violence conference.

Oct. 18 – Guelph, Ont., Canada: Phil Arkow will present on “Making the Cruelty Connection: A Species-Spanning Approach to Safer Families and Communities” to the [Association of Animal Shelter Administrators of Ontario](#).

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

Oct. 26 – Houston, Texas: Allie Phillips will speak about Sheltering Animals & Families Together (SAF-T)TM at a conference hosted by Mercy House Organization on co-housing families and pets of domestic violence.

Oct. 27 – Adelaide, SA, Australia: Featured speakers will showcase the work of [Safe Pets Safe Families](#) and describe plans for the future at a special Gala Night.

Oct. 31 – (online): Mary Lou Randour and Dan DeSousa will conduct a [Justice Clearinghouse webinar](#) on “Animal Cruelty Reporting: What Law Enforcement and Justice Professionals Need to Know” on behalf of the National Sheriffs Association.

Nov. 7 – Newton, N.J.: Phil Arkow will speak on The Link between animal abuse and domestic violence at the [Domestic Abuse & Sexual Assault Intervention Services](#) conference and help launch the Sussex County Coalition to Stop Violence Against People and Animals.

Nov. 7-9 – Louisville, Ky.: Randy Lockwood, Maya Gupta, Martha Smith-Blackmore, Gale Rasin, and Mary Lou Randour will be among the Link speakers at the 8th [National Animal Cruelty Prosecution Conference](#), hosted by the Association of Prosecuting Attorneys in partnership with the Animal Legal Defense Fund.

Nov. 15 – Anchorage, Alaska: Allie Phillips will speak at the [2018 Alaska Conference on Child Maltreatment](#) on “The Co-occurrence of Animal Abuse and Violence to Humans,” “Detecting and Reporting Animal Abuse,” “Incorporating Therapy Animals with Crime Victims,” and a session on natural self-care for child protection workers

Nov. 16-17 – Atlanta, Ga.: Nuria Querol will present on “Innovative Uses of Police Data: First Year’s NIBRS Data of Animal cruelty Crimes” and on “Violent Crime and Animal Abuse: Scientific Framework and Practical Approaches” at the [American Society of Criminology](#) conference.

Nov. 23 – Edmonton, Alberta, Canada: Phil Arkow will speak at the [Alberta Veterinary Medical Association](#)’s Veterinary Forensics Workshop.

Nov. 28 (online): Michelle Welch will conduct a Justice Clearinghouse [webinar](#) on “Combating Cock Fighting: What Investigators and Prosecutors Need to Know.”

Dec. 3-7 – San Antonio, Texas: “The Relationship of Animal Abuse and Family Violence” will be included in the [National Animal Cruelty Investigations School](#)’s Level III training for Expert investigators.

Dec. 13 (online): Jessica Rock will conduct a [Justice Clearinghouse](#) webinar on “Animal Cruelty Investigations and Prosecutions” on behalf of the National Sheriffs’ Association.

Jan. 15, 2019 (online): Michelle Welch will conduct a Justice Clearinghouse [webinar](#) on “The Link Between Animal Abuse and Human Abuse: Understanding the Link to Help Investigate and Prosecute Your Cases.”

Feb. 21, 2019 (online): Jessica Rock will conduct a [Justice Clearinghouse](#) webinar on “Dog Fighting Investigations and Prosecutions” on behalf of the National Sheriffs’ Association.

March 5, 2019 (online): Michelle Welch will conduct a Justice Clearinghouse [webinar](#) on “Creating an Animal Abuse & Cruelty Unit for Your Agency.”

March 25, 2019: Toledo, Ohio: Phil Arkow will headline a [Link seminar](#) at the University of Toledo.

March 27, 2019: Cleveland, Ohio: Phil Arkow will headline a [Link seminar](#) at Fairhill Partners.

March 29, 2019: Columbus, Ohio: Phil Arkow will headliner a [Link seminar](#) at COAAA.

May 23-24, 2019 – João Pessoa, Paraiba, Brazil: John Thompson will be the featured speaker on The Link at the [9th International Conference of Collective Veterinary Medicine](#) sponsored by the Education and Animal Control Technical Institute and Veterinary Council of Paraiba State.

Sept. 9, 2019 – Edinburgh, Scotland: Phil Arkow will be the keynote speaker at the [Scottish SPCA](#) and University of Edinburgh conference on Animal Welfare Education and The Link.



To subscribe to The Link-Letter (it's free!)
– Just send an e-mail to Coordinator Phil Arkow
arkowpets@snip.net
Please tell us what organization(s) you're with
and where you're located.



ABOUT THE NATIONAL LINK COALITION



The National Link Coalition is an informal, multi-disciplinary collaborative network of individuals and organizations in human services and animal welfare who address the intersections between animal abuse, domestic violence, child maltreatment and elder abuse through research, public policy, programming and community awareness. We believe that human and animal well-being are inextricably intertwined and that the prevention of family and community violence can best be achieved through partnerships representing multi-species perspectives.

Members of the National Link Coalition Steering Committee

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Chair, Animal Abuse & Family Violence Prevention Project,
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