



# NATIONAL LINK COALITION

Working together to stop violence against people and animals

**The LINK-Letter Vol. 11, No. 9 September 2018**

*A monthly report of news from THE NATIONAL RESOURCE CENTER*



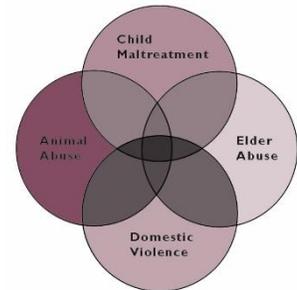
**ON THE LINK BETWEEN ANIMAL ABUSE AND HUMAN VIOLENCE**



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

[Phil Arkow](#), Coordinator and Editor

SUBSCRIBE – It's Free!!



**Andrew M. Campbell**

## **ANIMAL ABUSE AND... DOMESTIC VIOLENCE** **Victims of Intimate Partner and Animal Violence** **Found to be at Greater Risk of Harm**

When researchers in Indianapolis found their city's rate of intimate partner violence to be eight times greater than national averages, they were concerned. But even more illuminating were their findings, confirming numerous other studies, that pet abuse appeared as a frequent indicator of severity and risk.

Andrew Campbell and his colleagues demonstrated that animal abuse has serious implications for public safety with highly significant findings in households where both IPV and animal abuse occurred:

- 74% of victims experienced strangulation.
- Almost one-third had a history of sexual assault or rape.
- Children were present in the home in 60% of the cases.
- 70% of suspects either had easy access to or owned a firearm.
- 26% had been forced to have sex with the suspect.
- 78% of victims feared they would eventually be killed by the suspect.

Campbell told [WISH-TV](#) that these abusers also present a risk to the victims, to first responders, and to the community because they're often fleeing the scene under the influence of a substance.

The study reported that IPV victims residing with suspects with histories of pet abuse often describe "extremely high-risk" environments. The authors emphasized that victims in these environments should be considered at significant risk of suffering serious injury or death. The authors call for effective, collaborative and multidisciplinary prevention, detection and intervention strategies and safety plans that address the substantial risk of harm and injury for all adults, children, and animals in the home.

The research is prompting Indianapolis Animal Care Services and the Julian Center, which helps survivors of domestic and sexual violence, to explore ways in which they can work together. "As any pet lover will tell you, animals should be part of the solution to the problem," noted WISH-TV.

-- **Campbell, A., Thompson, S.L., Harris, T.L., & Wiehe, S.E. (2018, March 5). Intimate partner violence and pet abuse: Responding law enforcement officers' observations and victim reports from the scene. [Journal of Interpersonal Violence.](#)**

## ***BUILDING LINK AWARENESS***

### **Link PowerPoint Created for Students**

The National Link Coalition is pleased to announce the publication of a free PowerPoint and an accompanying Lesson Plan designed for local instructors to introduce The Link to school audiences. ***The Cruelty Connection: Animal Abuse and Its Links to Human Violence*** has been designed as a brief, 28-slide program which can be easily customized by educators.

The Cruelty Connection:  
Animal Abuse and Its Links  
to Human Violence



The program is designed primarily for high school audiences. But it can be scaled up or down for adult or younger audiences, said Phil Arkow, National Link Coalition Coordinator and a former full-time humane educator with 20 years of classroom experience.

Development of the program relied heavily on feedback from 35 humane educators across the U.S. and Canada who field-tested it in classrooms and offered suggestions from themselves and their students. While it has been designed primarily for use by humane educators, it can also be easily adapted for use by trainers from human services agencies who want to present The Link to student groups.

The slides purposefully have a minimalist background, making it easier for end-users to customize it with their organizations' own branding, logos, slide templates, program information, photos, state statutes, and local ordinances. The accompanying Lesson Plan offers many opportunities to engage students in discussions and further research into the connections between animal abuse and other forms of family violence. The Lesson Plan also includes a glossary of potentially unfamiliar terminology.

“This program augments traditional humane education presentations, which tend to focus just on animal welfare issues, by emphasizing how animal abuse also hurts people. It is always easier to introduce humane education by tying in to existing state or core standards or curricula. By showing how animal abuse is connected with bullying, school shooters, student safety, child welfare and development, and other Link issues, this may make it easier for humane educators to gain access to crowded school curricula,” Arkow said.

“We are encouraging humane educators to use the program widely, to modify it as necessary, and to let us know how it is received.”

The PowerPoint and Lesson Plan are free downloads in the [Resource Materials page](#) of the National Link Coalition's website. Just look under “General Fact Sheets & Overviews of The Link” for the Link for Students PowerPoint and Lesson Plan.

## **The Domestic Violence-Animal Abuse Link in Indian Country**

The National Link Coalition has been included in a resource directory for the Ponca Tribe of Nebraska. The directory lists the service providers in domestic violence, sexual assault, victim services and law enforcement both nationally and in the 18 counties in Nebraska, Iowa and South Dakota within the tribe's service delivery area.



## ***ANIMAL ABUSE &... CROSS-REPORTING***

### **Massachusetts Enacts Comprehensive Cross-Reporting of Elder/Disabled, Child and Animal Abuse**

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts took a major step forward in the interagency cross-reporting of family violence when Gov. Charlie Baker signed into law **S.2646** on Aug. 9. The measure:

- mandates animal control officers to report abuse of children, the elderly and the disabled;
- allows adult protective services workers to report suspected animal abuse; and
- creates a commission to examine the feasibility of mandating child and adult protective services to report animal abuse and animal control officers to report child, elder and disabled abuse.



**Gov. Charlie Baker**

The new law also updates the law against animal sexual abuse by prohibiting sexual contact with an animal and forcing a child to engage in sexual contact with an animal.

**MANDATED REPORTERS:** If animal control officers have reasonable cause to believe that an elderly or disabled person or child has been abused, they shall immediately make a verbal report and follow it up with a written report within 48 hours. Failure to report is punishable by a fine of up to \$1,000.

**PERMITTED REPORTERS:** Employees and contractors of the Department of Elder Affairs who have knowledge of or observe an animal known or reasonably suspected of being the victim of animal cruelty, abuse or neglect, may report it to any police officer or special state police officer within two working days. When an immediate response is necessary to protect the animal's health and safety, the report should be made by telephone as soon as possible. Reporters are immune from civil and criminal liability if it was made in good faith. Confidentiality provisions shall not prohibit the filing of reports.

**FEASIBILITY STUDY:** A special commission report by March 1, 2019 on the feasibility of mandating reporting of animal abuse by the Department of Children and Families, the Department of Elder Affairs and investigators for the Disabled Persons Protection Commission, and of mandating reporting of abuse of children, elderly and disabled persons by animal control officers. The commission will:

- look into the costs of training personnel to recognize and report such abuse;
- estimate anticipated increases in caseloads as a result of such reports;
- identify potential challenges, conflicts of interest or interference with primary job responsibilities as a result of these expanded reporting obligations;
- identify any necessary modifications to existing rules, regulations, by-laws or ordinances;
- and conduct a review of other states that have passed comparable mandated reporting laws.

**ANIMAL SEXUAL ABUSE:** The new law changes the archaic terminology of “the abominable and detestable crime against nature” to now prohibit “sexual contact with animals,” the promotion or facilitation of sexual contact with an animal, and forcing a child to engage in sexual contact with an animal. Conviction will result in forfeiture of the animal and prohibition against working or volunteering with, owning or living with animals for at least five years following release from custody. Lawful and accepted veterinary, animal husbandry and conformation judging practices are exempted.

Other provisions in the extensive law address abandoned animals, tethered animals, pets trapped in hot cars, and forfeiture of fighting animals seized in raids.



“The impact of animal abuse is far-reaching and the link between animal abuse and violence toward humans is well-documented,” noted the [Massachusetts SPCA](#) in supporting the measure. “A Massachusetts study found that a person who has committed

animal abuse is: five times more likely to commit violence against people, four times more likely to commit property crimes, and three times more likely to be involved in drunken or disorderly offenses. When our laws recognize this link, all our family members can be better protected.”

## ***ANIMAL ABUSE AND... CRIMINAL JUSTICE***

### **Bill Would Bar Animal Abusers from Owning Guns**

A bill in Congress would prohibit individuals with a misdemeanor conviction for animal cruelty from possessing a firearm. Rep. Katherine Clark (D- Mass.) introduced the Animal Violence Exposes Real Threat (AVERT) of Future Gun Violence Act as a commonsense step toward preventing individuals with a propensity for violence from accessing firearms.

“There is a well-documented link between animal abuse and future violence,” said Clark, “From Columbine to Parkland to Sutherland Springs, these perpetrators of mass gun violence had a history of animal abuse, and addressing this pattern of behavior is part of the solution when it comes to preventing gun violence and saving lives.”



**Rep. Cathy Clark**

The **AVERT Act, H.R. 6278** would close a loophole in the prosecution of animal cruelty. Current federal law prohibits individuals who have been convicted of a felony from possessing firearms. But because animal abuse is often prosecuted as a misdemeanor, individuals who have committed a violent crime that is predictive of future violence are still allowed to possess firearms. This used to be the case with misdemeanor domestic violence convictions, another crime with high risk of future violence, Clark explained. In 1996, Congress closed this dangerous loophole by prohibiting individuals with misdemeanor domestic violence convictions from possessing a firearm. The AVERT Act seeks to accomplish the same objective. [The Boston Globe](#) has endorsed the measure.

“The greatest indicator of future violence is past violent behavior,” said Christian Heyne of the Coalition to Stop Gun Violence, supporting the measure. “Cruelty toward and abuse of animals is often seen as a warning sign for domestic abuse and other violent behavior.” Other supporting organizations include the Humane Society Legislative Fund and the American Psychological Association.

**H.R. 6278** has seven co-sponsors and is in the House Judiciary Committee Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, Homeland Security, and Investigations. Clark has also sponsored the Pet And Women Safety (PAWS) Act which would allow domestic violence pet protection-from-abuse orders to be enforced across state lines and make \$3 million available to fund pet-friendly domestic violence shelters.

## National Sheriffs Association Creates Animal Cruelty Committee



**Sheriff John Layton**

The National Sheriffs Association has taken another pioneering step in recognizing the significance of animal abuse as a potential indicator and predictor of crimes against humans by creating a new committee to focus on animal cruelty issues.

Incoming NSA President John Layton, Sheriff of Marion County, Ind., created the Animal Cruelty Committee as one of his first official acts. It is believed to be the first and only one of its kind among law enforcement organizations.

“With the continued problems facing law enforcement across the country in reference to animal cruelty and animal-related incidents, along with the recent publication from the Joint Counterterrorism Assessment Team on the link between animal abuse and terrorism ([See the August 2018 LINK-Letter](#)), I am appointing a committee to look into the needs and concerns of our sheriffs across the country in handling this issue,” said Layton. “Law enforcement needs a unified voice to address animal cruelty, and this committee accomplishes that. No other law enforcement organization includes animal cruelty in its wheelhouse,” he continued.

Sheriff Robert Pickell (Michigan) will chair the committee and Sheriff Bill Bohnyak (Vermont) will be the vice chair. Other members include Sheriffs Carolyn (Bunny) Welch (Pennsylvania), Keith Cain (Kentucky), Troy Nehls (Texas), Leon Lott (South Carolina), Alex Hodge (Mississippi), Dave Mahoney (Wisconsin), Ronald Spoke (New York) and Undersheriff Rudy Mora (Texas), Additional members and subject matter experts include: Phil Arkow of the National Link Coalition; Nancy Blaney of the Animal Welfare Institute; forensic veterinarian Dr. Martha Smith-Blackmore; and Virginia Assistant Attorney General Michelle Welch.

Layton also announced the establishment of a School Safety Committee to organize a cohesive body of the nation’s sheriffs and other subject-matter experts on the issue of school shootings, and further instructed NSA’s Jail Committee to focus on developing innovative solutions to handling mental health and substance abuse in jails.

The NSA has also initiated the [National Coalition on Violence Against Animals](#) and the [National Law Enforcement Center on Animal Abuse](#).



### What is The LINK?

**Legislation...**

**Intervention...**

**Networking...**

**Knowledge...**

*...to protect **ALL** vulnerable members of the family*

## Animal Abuse Offender Registry Not Seen as Practical in Wales



The concept of animal cruelty offenders' registries, similar to those imposed on sex offenders, is gaining increased popularity and is often promoted based on the risk of offenders subsequently committing crimes against people (*See the [February 2018](#), [November 2016](#) and [December 2013 LINK-Letters](#)*). To date only one state (Tennessee), a handful of cities and counties, and Finland are believed to have enacted registries, with debatable effectiveness.

The RSPCA Cymru in Wales convened a year-long examination of the feasibility of such a registry in Wales. A 40-page report, written in English and Welsh, was presented to the Welsh government in July describing an extensive survey of 224 domestic and international organizations and individuals representing animal welfare organizations, the National Assembly, Parliament, local Authority leaders, magistrates, police officers, veterinarians, farm groups, and charities working with offenders.

The study concluded that numerous theoretical and practical issues are significant barriers making a Welsh offender registry unlikely at this time. "Whilst there was clearly a large amount of support for a register amongst stakeholders there are significant barriers to its creation that cannot be ignored," the report concluded, noting that enthusiasm for such registries is based upon conventional wisdom alone with an absence of evidence to prove their effectiveness. The group hoped the issue can be explored again in the future once improved data sharing and scientific research remove some of the obstacles.

Among the issues identified in the study were:

- **No set definition:** What impact might it have on current or reoffending animal cruelty? How would it be accessed? (Some offender databases are open to the public; others are accessible only by specified agencies or by the public if they pay a fee.)
- **What purpose would it serve?** Would it punish offenders? Serve as a deterrent? Stop future acquisition of animals? Inform the community to allow them to take action?
- **Under-utilization:** The few registries in place have extremely limited numbers of individuals in their databases, and limited usage by investigation and animal welfare agencies. Because not all animal shelters check on the suitability of potential adopters, a registry would not be widely utilized.
- **Scientific evidence:** Although evidence submitted to the study included the Links between animal cruelty, domestic violence, child abuse and elder violence, the lack of such research emanating from the UK or Wales was a great concern. American research may not be culturally relevant in a Welsh context.
- **Data protection:** Legal complications prohibit the exchange of information among law enforcement, local authorities and the RSPCA.
- **Enforcement:** There are currently no mechanisms to monitor offenders who have already been banned from acquiring other animals. The cost of having the RSPCA conduct spot checks of offenders' homes was seen as prohibitive.

- **Cost:** A suitable source of income was not identified to pay for the creation and maintenance of a registry, other than direct government funding which was not seen as a viable option in the current fiscal climate.

The report cited the ASPCA’s recent [position statement](#) regarding registries’ costs, limited scope in preventing cruelty, and absence of evidence that they serve to prevent recidivism.

“In many responses submitted to the consultation, the examples of animal cruelty used, although horrific in nature, would not necessarily be prevented through the establishment of an animal offender register,” the report concluded. Potential changes to sentencing being considered were seen as having a greater impact than a registry.

The group issued several recommendations to facilitate the sharing of information among law enforcement, prosecution and animal welfare agencies; to better understand patterns of offending behavior; to consider parity of sentences; and to fund research “within Wales or the UK on the impact of a register on offenders and wider research on the links between animal cruelty, domestic violence and child abuse, engaging with criminologists and enforcement agencies.”



The Pennsylvania Bar Institute’s 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Animal Law Conference included several Link references. National Link Coalition Coordinator Phil Arkow presented on how The Link connects the dots for the criminal justice system and makes animal cruelty legislation and enforcement more effective. Above, three panelists discussed Pennsylvania’s landmark Libre’s Law (See the [July 2017 LINK-Letter](#)) which recodified and strengthened animal cruelty laws in the Commonwealth, based in part upon legislative recognition that animal abuse also adversely impacts people. From left were: Kristen Tullo, Pennsylvania State Director for the Humane Society of the U.S.; Barbara Paul, animal cruelty prosecutor in the Philadelphia District Attorney’s Office; and Nicole Wilson, Director of Law Enforcement for the Pennsylvania SPCA.

### *Permission to Reprint*

The news items and training opportunities contained in *The LINK-Letter* are intended to disseminate as widely and as freely as possible information about the connections between animal abuse and interpersonal violence. Permission is hereby granted to re-post these articles in other newsletters, websites, magazines, and electronic publications provided that appropriate credit is given to the National Link Coalition and with links to [www.nationallinkcoalition.org](http://www.nationallinkcoalition.org)

## THE LINK IN THE LITERATURE

### Poor Regulation of Emotions, Personality Traits Seen as Key Factors in Animal Abuse

A new study by the FBI (See the [August 2018 LINK-Letter](#)) defined two types of animal cruelty perpetrators: “affective” offenders who are primarily emotionally driven into impulsive acts, and “predatory” offenders who demonstrate cold-blooded premeditation and a lack of emotion. A new research article by British forensic psychologists Charlotte Parfitt and Emma Alleyne explores the emotional underpinnings that can lead to acts of animal abuse.

Parfitt and Alleyne have written previously about the dynamics of antisocial behaviors affecting animals (See the [May 2018](#), [July 2017](#), and [September 2016 LINK-Letters](#)). They note that animal abuse is an under-reported yet prevalent form of both passive and active forms of aggressive behavior adversely affecting not only the victims themselves, but also others in proximity. Despite this, research and theory focusing on the motivations for animal cruelty are sparse and limited in development as compared to other types of offending behaviors, such as interpersonal violence.



Charlotte Parfitt

This new article examines the motivations that underlie animal abuse and the maladaptive emotion regulation techniques that facilitate this type of behavior. They focus on two specific emotion regulation styles that have been implicated in the literature: the mis-regulation and under-regulation of emotions. Based on existing research and theories, they argue that the facilitative role that emotion regulation plays in the perpetration of animal abuse is vital in our understanding of how and why this abuse occurs. They present a preliminary conceptualization of animal abuse behavior that depicts emotion regulation as a pivotal factor in key explanatory pathways.

-- Parfitt, C.H., & Alleyne, E. (2018). *Animal abuse as an outcome of poor emotion regulation: A preliminary conceptualization. Aggression and Violent Behavior, 42*, 61-70.



Emma Alleyne

In a second new article, Parfitt and Alleyne explore the propensity of adults to commit animal abuse by examining the relationships between animal abuse propensity and factors such as empathy, attitudes towards animals and antisocial behavior. A correlational study of 150 individuals examined further individual-level variables (i.e., personality traits) and behavioral factors as correlates of animal abuse proclivity and as a function of varying levels of animal abuse severity (e.g., neglect versus severe violence).

The authors found low extraversion, agreeableness, neuroticism, anger regulation, and illegal behavior to be significant factors related to animal abuse proclivity. They also found low extraversion, anger regulation, and illegal behavior to be significant factors across varying levels of animal abuse severity, but low neuroticism to be a unique factor related to less severe forms of animal abuse proclivity.

-- Parfitt, C.H., & Alleyne, E. (2018). *Animal abuse proclivity: Behavioral, personality and regulatory factors associated with varying levels of severity. Psychology, Crime and Law, 24(5)*, 538-557.

## One Welfare Framework Complements The Link and One Health

**ONE WELFARE**  
A Framework to Improve Animal  
Welfare and Human Well-being  
Rebeca Garcia Pinillos



The Link is a conceptual framework that explains how violence against humans and animals are often intertwined, with abuse against animals often being a precursor to, or co-occurring with, other crimes against persons and society. It complements the interdisciplinary One Health framework which understands the connections between human health, animal health and ecosystem health. Another complementary platform has emerged in the U.K. called One Welfare (*See the [August 2017 LINK-Letter](#)*), which combines both the Link and One Health concepts and amplifies them into a welfare-focused approach to improve animal welfare, human well-being and environmental goals.

The One Welfare concept is explored in depth in this new book by Rebeca Garcia Pinillos. The book describes the five components of the framework:

- The connections between animal and human abuse and neglect.
- The social implications of improved animal welfare.
- Animal health and welfare, human well-being, food security and sustainability.
- Assisted interventions involving animals, humans and the environment.
- Sustainability: Connections between biodiversity, the environment, animal welfare and human well-being.

The Link section features three case studies describing the work of the National Link Coalition and two of our international affiliates, VioPet in Spain and The Links Group in the U.K. This section, in tandem with the other four areas, help the One Welfare platform to address the reduction of violence around the world and how improving animal welfare can help improve human welfare. The book also describes several specific manifestations of The Link, including animal hoarding and animal welfare and crime.

A generous host of collaborating experts representing many disciplines contributed their expertise to help elucidate the framework. One Welfare, as with One Health and The Link, offers a unified concept that helps bridge the animal and human sciences and increase the efficiency of processes.

**-- Pinillos, R.G. (2018). *One Welfare: A Framework to Improve Animal Welfare and Human Well-Being*. Wallingford, Ox., U.K. and Boston, Mass.: CAB International.**



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



## Study Explores Beliefs of Zoophiles

Ongoing efforts to make bestiality or animal sexual abuse illegal are confounded by the presence of a population of individuals who practice zoophilia (“love of animals”) and who claim that their preference to have sex with animals should be considered legitimate. A new study explores the online discussion forums of 138 zoophiles, 135 of whom were exclusive zoophile, and three with pedophilic tendencies. Trend analysis identified the most frequently discussed topics: animals as an object of love; emotional closeness with animals; what are paraphilias; can animals consent to sex with humans; and misunderstanding terminology of zoophilia/bestiality.

Damian Jacob Sendler, chief of sexology and clinical research programs at the Felnett Health Research Foundation in New York, explored three primary areas. First, how zoophiles frequently ask why zoophilia is considered an act of bestiality if the term to them means “to murder.” Second, zoophiles believe that animals have an intrinsic ability to consent to sexual behaviors involving people. Third, most messages pointed to the lack of emotional support from the family and widespread public contempt.

-- Sendler, D.J. (2018, July 18). **Why people who have sex with animals believe that it is their sexual orientation -- a grounded theory study of online communities of zoophiles.**

*Deviant Behavior*, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01639625.2018.1491698>

## Human-Animal Interactions/Research Faculty Position Opening



Virginia Commonwealth University, Department of Psychiatry is recruiting a BE/BC Psychiatrist or doctoral level psychologist, social Worker, or counselor with human-animal interaction research and administrative experience and academic career interests to serve as the Bill Balaban Endowed Chair in Human-Animal Interaction and Director of the School of Medicine Center for Human-Animal Interaction (CHAI). Housed in the Department of Psychiatry, [CHAI](#) is internationally recognized for its human-animal interaction research and evidence-based therapy dog program, Dogs On Call.

The position also conducts collaborative human-animal interaction research and/or provide clinical care to patients with mental health disorders, and supervises and teaches residents and medical students. Pursuit of scholarly work and professional development are encouraged and supported. Academic rank is commensurate with experience and scholarly accomplishment consistent with VCU requirements. Opportunities are available for joint appointments. Interested applicants must [apply online](#) and include a letter of interest and CV. Questions should be directed to [Tammy Newcomb Beltz](#), HR Manager.

## **NEWS FROM LOCAL LINK COALITIONS**

### **In Colorado: Aurora is Link Aware!**

Aurora, Colorado – a sprawling city of 370,000 which straddles three counties east of Denver – is becoming “Link Aware” thanks to the reactivation of a Link coalition that disappeared in 2005. Using the National Link Coalition’s free [Toolkit](#), Aurora Animal Services, the City Attorney’s Office, and Gateway Battered Women’s Shelter formed a steering committee, crafted a three-year strategic plan, and hit the decks running by organizing four training and informational sessions in August.



The Aurora Link Coalition’s 2019-2021 Strategic Plan is deliberate and purposeful and addresses sustainability by focusing on collaboration and community outreach, professional development and advocacy. It includes a mission statement, vision, early success stories, and long-term goals.

“Our conversations began as departmental relationships and commitments to each other, and evolved into discussions about real people facing difficult situations,” said President Jenee Shipman, Manager of Aurora Animal Services, and Vice President Julie Heckman, Deputy City Attorney. “We realized we wanted to develop a channel that would encourage and enable others, both city staff and community members, to make a difference in the lives of people and pets impacted by violence.”

They see the Aurora Link Coalition as an opportunity for multi-disciplinary groups to have open and honest conversations with one another through networking, education and information sharing. The coalition is designed to empower people to become part of the solution to address violence.

“The Link offers a model that paves the way to serve the community together,” they note. A LINK-Aware Aurora helps protect the community, serves multiple needs, encourages awareness of the bigger picture, and addresses numerous at-risk populations. It encourages professional development, responsibility and collaboration, sets high standards, and builds servant leaders.

The Aurora LINK Coalition’s mission is to work collaboratively to address the connection between human violence and animal abuse by creating awareness and providing education and resources to reduce violence in all its forms. Its vision statement is that the Aurora LINK Coalition will be the lasting solution towards ending violence against humans and animals. The coalition has outlined four goals:

1. **Create a LINK informed Aurora through collaboration and community outreach.** Regularly scheduled meetings will allow agencies to network and build trust, and share information. Surveys and baseline information will determine the needs of LINK related agencies.
2. **Create a LINK informed Aurora through professional development.** A platform will be developed to support inter-agency cross-training, handouts, webinars, monthly newsletters, a website, and an annual LINK sponsored conference.
3. **Create a LINK informed community through advocacy.** Surveys, baselines and interviews will identify priorities and legislative issues. Coalition members will establish credibility and foster political relationships and representation at the Capitol to ensure that Aurora is asked about proposed legislation and its impact on the community.
4. **Create an operationally sustainable coalition to ensure a LINK informed Aurora.** By-laws will be developed that build-in sustainability, policies, procedures, and succession planning.

National Link Coalition Coordinator Phil Arkow – assisted by several members of our steering committee who live in the Denver area – was invited to conduct Link trainings for the Department of Neighborhood Services, City Attorney and Municipal Court personnel, and the Metro Denver Animal Welfare Alliance, and to introduce the new coalition to an Aurora City Council study session.



Deputy City Attorney Julie Heckman (left) and Animal Services Manager Jenee Shipman introduce The Link to Aurora’s Neighborhood Services Department. The department is in charge of animal services, community relations, community development, code enforcement, and neighborhood liaisons.



Local and national Link advocates gathered following a training. From left, Julie Heckman; National Link Coalition Coordinator Phil Arkow; National Link Coalition steering committee members Helen Holmquist-Johnson, Jane Hunt and Maria Luisa O’Neill; and Jenee Shipman celebrate the Aurora Link Coalition.



## New Link Coalition Organized in Indiana

A new Link coalition has coalesced in Bloomington, Ind. with the [Monroe County LINK Alliance](#) . Coordinator Tia Arthur, an Advocacy Case Coordinator for Monroe County CASA and Program Manager of the Courthouse Facility Dog Program, tells *The LINK-Letter*, “We are relatively new and small (but mighty!)”

The group started meeting with four handlers who work with animals in their professions: with courthouse facility dogs; with children in legal proceedings; as a school social worker with the school’s facility dog; and as education/outreach coordinator for the Monroe County Humane Association.

“Through our conversations and learning from each other, we decided we were going to do more than have coffee and discuss the dynamics of working with animals and perhaps educate our community about the different types of working animals. We quickly realized there was a larger issue not being addressed and we made it our mission to start the Monroe County LINK Alliance,” Arthur says.

“We aren’t a group that hosts speakers, talks about what each person is doing in their silo, and goes home. We are taking action and working to create real change in our community. We’ve built quite the list of people who have become involved and wish to help create an effective community coordinated response.”

Arthur appreciative of the support of Monroe County Sheriff Brad Swain who is bringing Jim Boller of Code 3 Associates to Bloomington on Sept. 18 to train law enforcement officers on how to avoid adverse encounters with residents’ dogs, and a symposium for the general public on The Link. Sheriff Swain “recognizes the need for change to improve the lives of all living beings in our community,” she says.

## Swedish Coalitions Build Political, Professional and Public Awareness



Our two Link affiliates in Sweden have been active this summer in building public, professional and political interest in the ways that animal abuse predicts and co-occurs with other forms of family and community violence. Nathalie Nordén tells *The LINK-Letter* that [VOOV](#) -- Veterinär Omtanke Om Våldsutsatta – conducted a seminar during Almedalen Week in Gotland, a political street festival that attracts NGOs, companies and political representatives. The event was particularly important as this is an election year in Sweden. Some 50 persons, including several politicians, attended the seminar.



### Se Sambandet

In April, our other affiliate [Se Sambandet](#) invited Dr. Freda Scott-Park from [The Links Group UK](#) to present several lectures during a week-long visit. One presentation was to members of Parliament, coordinated with the Swedish Green Party.

## Link Work Continuing in Brazil

Our Link affiliate in Brazil, [Rita de Cassia Maria Garcia](#) of Lar em Paz, tells *The LINK-Letter* that Link awareness and progress continue to increase in Latin America's largest nation. Research groups in Paraná, Minas Gerais and São Paulo are investigating the Link between animal abuse and interpersonal violence. Police authorities in São Paulo and Paraná that work with domestic violence survivors are collecting information about concurrent animal abuse. The state domestic violence prevention program in Paraná is including Link information in their collection of statistics, and is using Link information to train judges, attorneys and other professionals who work in the domestic violence sector. And a course about The Link is offered every April at Paraná Federal University.



## 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 114<sup>th</sup> and 115<sup>th</sup> 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 as Subtitle E, Section 12503 of [H.R. 2 – the Farm Bill](#). 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. [H.R. 2](#) has passed both the House and Senate and is in a conference committee attempting to resolve differences between the two versions.



**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 and Senate and was sent to the Governor on Aug. 20.



**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 Senate and is in a conference committee which may convene after the Legislature adjourns on Aug. 29.



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 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup>-degree offense, depending on severity, to knowingly torture or kill an animal with the intent to cause mental distress or exert control over a person. The bill 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.

 **Pennsylvania SB 480** would increase the penalties for a person committing cruelty to an animal belonging to a spouse or partner who is under either a protection from abuse, sexual violence or intimidation order. Current penalties range from \$1,000 to \$10,000; the bill would increase these to \$2,000 and \$15,000. The bill was laid on the table in the Senate.

 **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 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 headed to the House Judiciary Committee where it has 281 co-sponsors.



Existing **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.2646** updates existing statutes and changes the archaic terminology of “the abominable and detestable crime against nature” to now prohibit “sexual contact with animals.” It prohibits sexual contact with an animal, the promotion or facilitation of sexual contact with an animal, and forcing a child to engage in sexual contact with an animal. Conviction will result in forfeiture of the animal and prohibition against working or volunteering with, owning or living with

animals for at least five years following release from custody. Lawful and accepted veterinary, animal husbandry and conformation judging practices are exempted. The law also establishes *Cross-Reporting* among child, elder and animal abuse personnel. **The bill was signed into law on Aug. 9 by Gov. Charlie Baker.**

 **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 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** and took 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 **took effect immediately on Aug. 15.**



**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 Hoarding*



**Florida SB 86** would have defined animal hoarding as keeping a large number of companion animals in overcrowded conditions; failing to provide them with 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 4<sup>th</sup>-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 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.**

## 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** and became effective July 1.



**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.2646** permits 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 law mandates animal control officers to report suspected child abuse, elder abuse and abuse against disabled persons. Individuals who report in good faith are immune from civil and criminal liability; confidentiality provisions will not prohibit an individual from making a report. A special commission will be appointed to study the feasibility of mandating these cross-reports. The law also affects *Animal Sexual Abuse*. **The bill was signed into law on Aug. 9 by Gov. Charlie Baker.**



**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, abuse and neglect to peace officers, humane agents or animal control officers. **HF 787** and **SF1167** would have given them immunity from civil liability. **The bills died in 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 NIBRS 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 suspected animal abuse in good faith to law enforcement agencies. **The bill died when the Legislature adjourned.**



**New York S621** and **A4904** would have required veterinarians to report suspected animal cruelty to police, SPCAs, peace officers, district attorney's offices, animal control officers, the department of agriculture and markets, or other appropriate agencies and to turn over necessary records. New York veterinarians are currently permitted but are not required to report. **The bills were in the respective Higher Education Committees 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 **did not survive the amendment process**.

### *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 died in committees 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 received an unfavorable report from the House Judiciary Committee and **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 allow 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.**

## *Animal Abuse and Other Crimes*



**H.R. 6278, the AVERT (Animal Abuse Exposes Real Threat) Future Gun Violence Act**, would bar individuals convicted of misdemeanor animal cruelty from owning firearms, similar to existing prohibitions for persons convicted of misdemeanor domestic violence. The bill has seven co-sponsors and is in the House Judiciary Committee Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, Homeland Security, and Investigations.



**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 3<sup>rd</sup> 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.**



**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.**



**Pennsylvania HB 1197** would make animal fighting an indictable offense under existing racketeering provisions addressing offenses committed by corrupt organizations. The crime would specifically pertain to individuals who are directly involved in the animal fighting rather than spectators or individuals wagering on the outcome. The bill is in the Senate Judiciary Committee.

## THE LINK... IN THE NEWS

### Boyfriend Gets 9 Months for Killing Roommate's Dog and Staging Fake Burglary



Justin Pope

A Newport Beach, Calif. man who killed his live-in girlfriend's dog and tried to cover it up by staging a burglary was convicted of animal cruelty and petty theft. Justin James Pope, 27, pled guilty to felony animal cruelty, felony theft, and misdemeanors of concealing evidence and making a false report to an officer. He will spend nine months in jail, according to the [Newport Beach Indy](#). Pope killed the woman's dog, then called her to tell her about it, and subsequently staged a burglary – including removing her TV – after officers left the scene. The missing items were later found in the trunk of Pope's car.

### Dog Breeder with Criminal Record Sentenced to Four Years

A dog breeder with a lengthy criminal record was sentenced to four years in jail for his actions resulting in the deaths of two puppies in a squalid, unlicensed kennel. Salem, Mass. Superior Court Judge James Lang imposed the sentence on Dominick Donovan, 54, on July 25 after he was found guilty on six counts of animal cruelty. Donovan had hanged two 20-week-old Dobermann pinschers until they died, and cropped the ears of four other puppies without anesthesia. Donovan has been convicted of other crimes, dating to the 1980s, including animal cruelty, unsanitary kennel conditions, drunken driving, criminal mischief, and weapons charges, according to the [Salem News](#).



Dominick Donovan

Veterinarian Martha Smith-Blackmore, who serves on the National Link Coalition steering committee, submitted a victim-impact statement on behalf of the dogs. "Make no mistake about it: these victim-dogs' ear crops and deaths were deliberately traumatic and involved considerable suffering," she wrote. "The defendant elected to do unthinkable things to these dogs himself, whether from greed, for his own convenience or out of some sadistic power and control motivation." She called the acts "a deep betrayal of the human-animal bond."

### Trio Charged with 1,460 Counts of Animal Sexual Abuse and Cruelty, Plus Child Abuse

Three men were each charged with 1,460 counts of sexual intercourse with animals, 1,460 counts of animal cruelty, plus felony charges of endangering the welfare of a child and corruption of a minor in what Clearfield County, Pa. District Attorney William Shaw Jr. called one of the most extreme cases of animal abuse that his office has handled. A 16-year-old boy told Pennsylvania state police that the three men allegedly used a specially designed v-shaped pen to facilitate the sexual contact with dogs, horses, a cow, and a goat, according to the [Centre Daily Times](#). Terry Wallace, 40, Matthew Brubaker, 32, and Marc Measnikoff, 34, of Munson, Pa., were charged in the incident, which also resulted in the seizure of recording equipment, cameras and many homemade videos. State police and the local SPCA are seeking placement for the animals, and the teen was placed in protective custody pending an investigation into the extent of mental or physical abuse to which he may have been exposed.



Terry Wallace, left, & Marc Measnikoff

## Police Warning About Dogs in Hot Car Leads to Felony Assault Charges



Clint Martinez, captured on police officer's body-cam

A Boulder, Colo. man is facing felony assault and animal cruelty charges after allegedly spitting on and running his car into a police officer who was warning him about leaving his dogs in a hot car. The [Boulder Daily Camera](#) reported that officers responded to a report of two dogs locked in a hot car outside a restaurant. They traced the car to Clint Martinez II, 21, and reached him on his cellphone. He agreed to come outside and meet with the police, who gave him a warning on the condition that he take the dogs home.

Police said Martinez said he needed to pay his check and would then leave, but went back inside and did not come out for more than a half-hour. When an officer went in to look for him, Martinez was leaving the building through a different exit, carrying an ice cream cone.

Police then opted to cite him for improper care of animals; after he was handed his ticket, he allegedly spat on an officer. When the cop opened Martinez' door to pull him from the car, he allegedly put the car in reverse and hit the officer and also nearly struck a passing cyclist before driving away. He was later apprehended.

## Woman Charged with Starving Ex-Boyfriend's Dog

Elizabeth James, of Laurens, S. Car., was apparently so mad at her ex-boyfriend that she failed to feed it for at least 30 days and left it outside to die, according to animal cruelty charges filed against her.

[WYFF-TV](#) reported that James was feeding her own dogs but allegedly neglected to feed "Champ," a 16-month-old mastiff who was found near-death by a passerby. Champ weighed only 50 pounds instead of a normal 110 pounds, according to a veterinarian who examined him.

## Police Sergeant Charged with Animal Cruelty and Child Endangerment



Christopher Vetrano

A sergeant with the Austin, Texas Police Department is facing charges of animal cruelty and child endangerment after a neighbor caught him on video allegedly beating his dog with what appears to be a broom or rake handle in front of a child. [KXAN-TV](#) reported that Christopher Vetrano, 47, who has been with the police department since 2002, said he was trying to discipline the dog because it digs in the yard of his home in Kyle, a suburb of Austin. A neighbor, who filmed the incident, said she had seen a similar incident several months earlier but did not get it on camera.

Court documents noted that Child Protective Services was called in due to the verbal and emotional abuse witnessed on video by Vetrano's child. A veterinarian who examined the dog said it reported no signs of aggression, and a canine aggression and behavior specialist told police that a beating with a broom is inappropriate discipline. Vetrano remains on the police force but has been placed on restricted duty.

## 300 Fighting Roosters Seized in Gambling Raid

Agents of the Washington State Gambling Commission seized 300 roosters and arrested the ringleaders of an illegal cockfighting operation in Port Orchard on June 2. With assistance from multiple police and animal control agencies in Kitsap County, plus U.S. postal inspectors and Homeland Security investigators, agents also seized \$35,000 in cash believed to be wagers and winnings, according to a Commission [press release](#). Kenneth Castro San Nicolas, 55, and Joe Leon Guerrero Salas, 66, were arrested on felony charges of professional gambling, animal fighting, and leading organized crime. 27 people were detailed at the scene. “Cockfighting is a brutal blood sport that is almost always operated solely for the purpose of conducting illegal gambling,” said Commission Director Dave Trujillo. “With assistance from our law enforcement partners, we were able to take the ringleaders into custody and save these birds from a cruel and violent death.”



A suspect in the cockfighting raid is led away

## Couple Charged with Child Trafficking in Puppy Mill Investigation



Jeffery Leon & Barbara Jean Barrett

A Greenville, Texas couple who were already facing a trial for allegedly running a puppy mill have been arrested on charges of human trafficking under accusations that they used their five adopted children as slave labor. Jeffery Leon and Barbara Jean Barrett were each being held on \$650,000 bond in what a Texas Attorney General’s official called one of the first, if not the first, child labor investigations in Texas. The [Greenville Herald-Banner](#) reported that the five children, three boys and two girls, aged 12 to 17, were placed in state custody. The couple were arrested last year when officials seized 117 animals, which triggered a child abuse investigation; four of the children were said to have bruises, scars and open wounds and reportedly told authorities that they had been beaten with plywood, bamboo sticks and brushes by both foster parents. The children, who had been adopted from California, had been removed from public school to care for the animals. If convicted of child trafficking, the Barretts face imprisonment of 25 years to life with no option for probation.

## Ex-Political Leader Charged With Stabbing Mother’s Dog in Religious Rant



Todd Kincannon

A former controversial official with the Republican Party in South Carolina with a history of domestic violence is facing animal cruelty charges for allegedly stabbing his mother’s dog to death, telling police officers that he is “the second coming of Christ” and that God told him to kill the dog because Jesus needs a sacrifice and blood must be spilled every 1,000 years. The [Washington Post](#) reported that police said that Todd Kincannon, 37, of Simpsonville, S.C., killed the dog with his bare hands and that his mother had locked herself in the bathroom in terror. An officer reportedly found Kincannon sitting on the house’s porch steps, shirtless and covered in blood and dog hair. He was taken to a hospital for a mental health evaluation. Kincannon made national headlines several years ago for inflammatory tweets about Trevor Martin, Nancy Pelosi, and African-American refugees in the New Orleans Superdome after Hurricane Katrina. He was arrested in 2015 on a domestic violence charge after his wife told police she was in fear for her life. His law license was later suspended. His LinkedIn page claimed he was “executive director, general counsel and parliamentarian” for the South Carolina Republican Party from 2004 to 2010.

## The Domestic Violence/Animal Abuse Link in Queens, N.Y.

### Man Faces Cruelty Charges in Killing of Girlfriend's Dog

A New York City man has been charged with aggravated animal cruelty for allegedly beating his girlfriend's shih tzu to death, dumping its body in a nearby parking lot, and then hiding the fact from her. Brando Henriquez, 23, of the Woodside section of Queens, faces up to two years in prison. The [Sunnyside Post](#) reported that Henriquez was put in charge of the dog, named "Lavonia," while the girlfriend was out; when she returned home he reportedly told her the dog must have escaped. She put up "lost dog" posters; days later her mother and brother discovered the dog's remains in a white plastic bag in the parking lot. Video footage captured Henriquez allegedly leaving his girlfriend's residence carrying a white plastic bag and walking in the direction of the parking lot. "The defendant is accused of...brutally killing a small helpless dog and heartlessly offering false hope to his girlfriend and family by making them think the dog had just run away," said Queens District Attorney Richard A. Brown. "For the next four days she and family members searched the area...only to find the dog's remains where the defendant allegedly disposed of them."

### Boyfriend Pleads Guilty for Burning Girlfriend's Puppy

Meanwhile, in a second case in Queens of a girlfriend's dog being harmed in a domestic abuse situation, a man has pled guilty to animal cruelty charges. Dwayne Ellis, 24, had held his girlfriend's 4-month-old pit bull puppy against a scalding hot pipe during a fight in their Jamaica bathroom last winter. The [New York Post](#) reported the dog was badly burned. Ellis pled guilty in Queens Supreme Court on Aug. 7 and faces eight months in prison when he is sentenced at a later date.



Paul Khouzam

### Man Charged with Burglary, Assault and Animal Cruelty

Yates County, N.Y. officers responding to a domestic violence disturbance charged a Branchport man with aggravated animal cruelty, burglary and assault for allegedly breaking into a home, assaulting a woman and killing her dog. Sheriff's deputies arrested Paul Khouzam, 37, in the incident. An unidentified 67-year-old woman was airlifted to a hospital in Rochester where she underwent emergency surgery and was in guarded condition, [WENY-TV](#) reported. Deputies also reportedly discovered the body of a small Chihuahua-mix dog, which was sent to Cornell University Animal Hospital for a forensic autopsy.

### Alleged Dog Fighter Charged with Narcotics and Other Offenses

Police in Cleveland, Ohio arrested Robert Cook, 34, and charged him with 13 felony counts of dog fighting plus other charges including possession of criminal tools and drugs. The [Cleveland Plain Dealer](#) reported that Cook had testosterone, testosterone enanthate and stanozolol in his possession when he was arrested.



Robert Cook



Mark Anthony Rice

### Man Charged with Beating Dog in Front of His Wife and Child

A South Carolina man is facing domestic violence, child abuse and felony animal cruelty charges and as many as five years in prison for allegedly beating a dog with a two-by-four in front of his wife and small child. [The State](#) newspaper reported that police obtained a graphic video depicting Mark Anthony Rice, 26, of South Congaree, allegedly beating the dog repeatedly. Lexington County Animal Services and Sheriff’s deputies took Rice into custody and transferred the dog, a Cane Corso, plus two other dogs and a cat to the shelter for medical examination.



Gavin Ray Eckiss

### Man with Homicidal Thoughts Said to Slit Mother’s Dog’s Throat

A man whom police said is schizophrenic and harbors homicidal thoughts was charged with animal cruelty for allegedly slitting the throat of his mother’s dog. Gavin Ray Eckiss, 26, of Lafayette, Ind., allegedly coaxed his mother’s 5-year-old Yorkie named “Buddy” outside where he slit the dog’s throat before checking himself into a mental facility, the [Lafayette Journal & Courier](#) reported. Officers found him at the hospital with blood on his shoes, police said.

## LINK TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

**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:** The Dallas County District Attorney’s Felicia Kerney and Carla Bean will speak to the [North Texas Link Coalition](#) on The Link to Human Violence and on Pet Protection Orders.

**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. 18 – Bloomington, Ind.:** Jim Boller of [Code 3 Associates](#) will conduct a Link training on behalf of the Monroe County Link Alliance.

**Sept. 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. 2 – (online):** Andrew Campbell will conduct a [Justice Clearinghouse webinar](#) on “Bad to the Bone: Pet Abuse, Child Abuse and Intimate Partner Violence” on behalf of the National Sheriffs Association.

**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 5<sup>th</sup> 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 16<sup>th</sup> 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)<sup>™</sup> 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. 2 – Phoenix, Md.:** Jenny Edwards, Adam Lippe, Jim Crosby, Nikki Caferra, and John Thompson will be among the speakers at the [2018 Animal Abuse Leadership Summit](#), whose theme this year is animal sexual abuse.

**Nov. 5 – London, U.K.:** [The Links Group UK](#) will hold its Annual General Meeting at Dogs Trust.

**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 8<sup>th</sup> [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. 27 – Harrisburg, Pa.:** Phil Arkow will conduct a training on domestic violence and animal abuse for the [PCADV](#)’s Domestic Violence Attorneys Network.

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

**Nov. 29 – Westminster, Colo.:** [Animal Control Training Services](#) will conduct an all-day training on “Understanding the ‘Link’ in Animal Abuse hosted by Westminster Animal Management.

**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 26, 2019: Cleveland, Ohio:** Phil Arkow will headline a [Link seminar](#) at Fairhill Partners.

**March 27, 2019: Toledo, Ohio:** Phil Arkow will headline a [Link seminar](#) at the University of Toledo.

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

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



## ABOUT THE NATIONAL LINK COALITION



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

### Members of the National Link Coalition Steering Committee

#### Phil Arkow, Coordinator

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

#### Lesley Ashworth

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

#### Diane Balkin, J.D.

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

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

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

#### Robin Brock

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

#### Maya Gupta, Ph.D.

Senior Director of Research,  
ASPCA Strategy & Research Division  
Woodstock, Ga.

#### Helen Holmquist-Johnson, MSW, Ph.D.

Director, Human-Animal Bond in Colorado (HABIC)  
Colorado State University School of Social Work  
Ft. Collins, Colo.

#### Jane A. Hunt

Community Volunteer  
Loveland, Colo.

#### Mark Kumpf, CAWA

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

#### Randall Lockwood, Ph.D.

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

#### Paul Needham

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

#### Maria Luisa O'Neill

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

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

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

#### Allie Phillips, J.D.

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

#### Gale Rasin, J.D.

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

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

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

#### Martha Smith-Blackmore, DVM

President, Forensic Veterinary Investigations, LLC  
Boston, Mass.

#### Hugh Tebault III

President,  
The Latham Foundation  
Alameda, Calif.

#### John Thompson

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