



NATIONAL LINK COALITION

Working together to stop violence against people and animals

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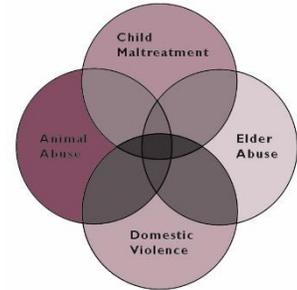
ON THE LINK BETWEEN ANIMAL ABUSE AND HUMAN VIOLENCE



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[Phil Arkow](#), Coordinator and Editor



EXPANDED DOUBLE ISSUE

MASS SHOOTINGS... and THE LINK

Potential Link to Mass Shootings Cited in Call for More Animal Cruelty Law Enforcement

Caroline A. Griffin, who initiated Baltimore’s Show Your Soft Side campaign depicting macho athletes with their pets (*See the [October 2016 LINK-Letter](#)*) and who was instrumental in the city’s Anti-Animal Abuse Task Force and Commission, cited the National Link Coalition’s statement about animal abuse’s Links to mass shootings (*See the [June 2022 LINK-Letter](#)*) in an op-ed criticizing the Baltimore Police Department’s inaction on animal cruelty cases.



Caroline A. Griffin

The op-ed, appearing in the July 12 issue of the [Baltimore Sun](#), excoriated the department for not heeding the warnings of recent mass shootings and known Links between animal cruelty and terrorism. The department, she wrote, has dramatically scaled back its willingness to investigate referrals from Animal Control; fewer than 10% of cases referred for investigation have seen charges filed.

Despite staff shortages, some cases not having enough information to warrant an investigation, and a department which is “drowning in a punishing caseload of homicides and other violent crime,” the police’s stance vis-à-vis animal abuse is “counterproductive and myopic,” she wrote. She cited the federal Joint Counterterrorism Assessment Team’s 2019 warning that animal cruelty is a “novel warning behavior” that may be useful in “identifying an accelerated and increased risk of violence that should elevate authorities’ concern.”

Meanwhile, police officers no longer accompany unarmed Animal Enforcement Officers, who do not have the authority to make arrests, when serving warrants. “Despite the scrutiny focused on this problem for over a decade, Baltimore continues to treat these cases as minor property crimes. The BPD can no longer afford to ignore the red flag of animal cruelty and those who engage in this novel warning behavior,” she concluded. “Regrettably, Baltimore’s response to animal cruelty has never been more imperiled.”

Animal Abuse Link to Mass Shootings Subject of Day-Long Webinar

The potential significance of animal abuse as a warning sign for mass shootings was the subject of a series of webinars conducted by the [Small & Rural Law Enforcement Executives Association](#) on July 13. Presenters described for over 151 participants the various pathways by which the trajectory of mass violence and maximum lethality emerge, with calls for greater recognition of animal abuse as a warning sign and greater multidisciplinary responses to prevent future tragedies.

Red Flags: Pre-Incident Warning Behaviors You Need to Know.



Mary Ellen O'Toole

Dr. Mary Ellen O'Toole, a retired profiler in the FBI's Behavioral Analysis Unit, began her detailed research into mass murderers in 1999 with what she thought was an isolated incident with the Columbine High School massacre. In subsequent years she has refined her work to better understand the threat assessments and identifying pathways that put people – primarily youths and young men – on a trajectory to mass violence that inflicts maximum lethality.

“We know without a doubt there will be another mass shooting. It will happen,” she warned. And the recent incidents in Buffalo, Uvalde and Highland Park are “catastrophic in the number of victims and how frequently they happen.” The shootings are causing a “generational damage in our society” and “we may not know what that damage is for decades to come.”

The critical word to understand is prevention, she said; we're not yet at a point where we can predict who the next shooter will be. To prevent future incidents we have to analyze behavior and personality and be able to convince people that we are depending on them to tell us what these warning behaviors are, she said. Society unfortunately has a way of normalizing or explaining away problematic behavior, so it's up to family members, friends, schools, and others who are closest to potential shooters to warn that there's something wrong going on here.

There are many warning signs in the long and complex trajectory to violence and the forces that move people from anger to hatred. An accumulation of those factors – particularly in a home where there is access to firearms – is a dangerous mix for someone who wants to inflict maximum lethality. One such factor is a history of animal cruelty which she called “a concerning behavior,” rather than a definitive predictor, especially if it is part of a pattern of other concerning behaviors.

“Animal abuse is not a good thing. But is it predictive of someone becoming more violent? I have to tell you that it is not,” she advised.

In the cases she has examined O'Toole found “many glaring commonalities,” especially a phenomenon called “leakage” where the perpetrator reveals in advance what he is going to do. Leakage rarely occurs in other types of crimes; “You don't tell people that you're going to rob a bank or steal a car,” she said, but posting about a mass shooting is a sign of the perpetrator's confidence, motivation and need for recognition. “Leakage is probably the most powerful pre-event warning sign that we know about. The important part is to capture that leakage and use it as an intervention tool.”

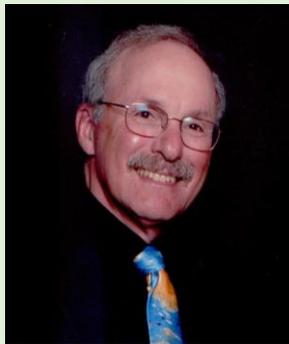
She emphasized that mass shooters are not impulsive or responding to hormonal changes; their actions are premeditated and thoughtful, often involving pre-event reconnaissance, but they make poor

decisions because they are often at a post-adolescent age where their brains are not fully developed and they are less afraid of undertaking risky behaviors.

Shooters really enjoy the planning and carrying out the crime, she said, as it makes them feel emboldened and powerful. They feel this was their only course of action because their life has turned against them. They want to kill a lot of people and see them die because considering other people as just objects helps them justify how they feel about themselves and their lot in life. “They kill because they want to; they have the ability to stop but they don’t,” she said, noting that at the time of the shooting they exhibit “a remarkable lack of empathy.”

Mass shooters are not necessarily psychopathic but they are people who have no conscience, she concluded. The majority are not clinically mentally ill but they don’t have a healthy mind, and it’s up to the people who are closest to these young men to notice the remarkable shifts and changes in personality and refer them to law enforcement or for treatment. “The trajectory to violence doesn’t just happen on the day of the event; it’s long. And it’s not an easy fix; one counseling session won’t do,” she said. “It’s going to be a heavy lift and will take a long time to fix.”

Animal Abuse: The “Missing Link” to Preventing Mass Shooters Incidents



Phil Arkow

National Link Coalition Coordinator Phil Arkow presented an objective look at the myths and realities surrounding animal abuse and mass shootings. Popular media frequently oversimplify the common belief that “all mass murderers and serial killers started out killing animals,” he said, emphasizing that while a history of animal abuse can be a risk factor for future violence, the backgrounds of mass murderers involve many more complex factors.

He presented research suggesting that perhaps 10% of mass shooters have histories of animal abuse, a figure which, while significant, may not necessarily be a robust predictor of future shootings. He described several cases where the animal abuse was merely one in a series of familial, social, school, and other factors in the lives of youths who were obviously troubled.

Arkow reviewed eight “proximal” warning behaviors that suggest an individual should be actively risk-managed, and 10 “distal” watch behaviors that suggest a case should be actively monitored. These are part of the TRAP-18 Terrorist Radicalization Assessment Protocol developed by forensic psychologist Reid Meloy. Cruelty to animals fits within one warning behavior and one watch behavior.

He noted numerous challenges, including:

- Varying definitions of animal cruelty and mass shootings;
- Sporadic and under-prioritized enforcement of animal cruelty laws, particularly in rural areas and smaller communities;
- Incomplete data from the FBI’s NIBRS system due to gaps in the reporting process;
- The enormous impact of social media on young peoples’ lives;
- The absence of effective educational or mental health interventions;
- Society’s expectations that law enforcement or schools, rather than parents, should solve their children’s issues; and
- Too many guns in the hands of youths who shouldn’t have them.

He outlined several action steps, including:

- Treat severe animal abuse, especially by youths, as a sentinel warning sign;
- Develop early and effective mental health interventions and animal cruelty enforcement;
- Recognize child abuse's potential impact on future violence against animals and humans;
- Monitor social media for warning signs; and
- Better gun safety and extreme risk protection laws.

Creating a Multidisciplinary Team



Todd Curtis

Todd Curtis, Chief Investigator for the Wood County, Ohio prosecutor's office, described his region's multi-disciplinary team which is helping law enforcement to better understand the correlation between animal cruelty and violence and provide them with a wealth of information to prevent future violent acts. A team approach to lethality assessments, he said, is a more effective way to prevent domestic violence, sexual abuse, animal abuse, and mass violence.

The team includes domestic violence advocates, humane and animal control officers, mental health professionals, probation officers, child protective services, law enforcement, school resource officers, and dispatchers, with law enforcement being the lead contact. The team has created a standardized inter-agency referral form and an alert system to warn officers of a lethality risk, plus approach and escape routes, when responding to a domestic violence scene; many area police officers were ambushed and shot when responding to domestic violence calls and an abuser with access to firearms increases the officers' lethality risk by 1100%.

Domestic violence abusers define their home as a castle and keep everyone behind closed doors. Knowing that the police are coming is when desperate thinking starts, often leading to lethality. Curtis said that strangulation and animal abuse within that scenario are particularly dangerous examples of a "castle mentality" where officers invading the abuser's space are at extreme risk. "The numbers are staggering and it's important to understand that castle mentality." He noted that while only 5% of mass shooters have mental health issues, 60% have histories of domestic violence.

Violence is just one method of gaining power and control, a self-serving means for the offender's fulfillment and ego boosting. Most offenders have an inferiority complex but they create a "mirage" of being superior or God-like and think they're smarter than the police. They are extremely manipulative, demean authority figures and prey on others for ego gratification. This power reassurance restores the offender's self-confidence and self-worth through violence against children or animals.

Abusing animals is a significant way to make a statement, vent their frustration and anger, promote their power, demonstrate their criminal skill, and boost their self-esteem. The killing of animals can be linked to rehearsals for killing human victims. Meanwhile, most domestic violence abusers believe there is little to no risk for them to abuse an animal. "Abusers have told us they really like the power and control and terror and that's what this is all about."

Curtis is especially interested in learning from humane and animal control officers about cases of bestiality. An animal sex offender is “somebody I want to know about and have in my system,” he said.

The team holds trainings and meetings every 4-6 weeks and has developed a dating violence program. They have expanded a standard domestic violence lethality assessment form to identify individuals who might become a threat to the community and not just to his significant other. They have placed warning cards – where a domestic violence survivor can alert staff that she is in danger – in women’s restrooms in area hospitals and at least one veterinary clinic.

“We are recognizing how important it is to pay attention to animal abuse – they are used as objects of intimidation and sexual deviance.”

Animal Abuse Forensics: The Hidden Clues



Martha Smith-Blackmore

Forensic veterinarian Martha Smith-Blackmore presented her perspective of using forensic science to aid animal cruelty criminal investigations. This is a fairly new practice but one that is gaining traction, she said. “Since crimes against animals are a good indicator of future violent behavior towards humans, law enforcement needs to be aware of the services forensic science professionals can provide them.”

Reviewing several graphic necropsies and emphasizing that animal cruelty that is committed “up-close and personal” is even more of a risk factor for future violence, she encouraged law enforcement officers to work with local practitioners to conduct post-mortem examinations that can help seal a case. She recognized that while there are formal programs to train county medical examiners, few communities today have veterinarians who are trained in forensics and local veterinarians need assistance in “getting into the forensic mindset.”

She encouraged participants to find a willing local veterinarian and explain that they do not have to do this work *pro bono*: they can get paid for their professional services, and that it is unlikely that they will lose time from work because most cruelty cases are resolved without going to courtroom adjudication. In high-stakes cases, an outside expert can be brought in.

Veterinarians who are trained not anthropomorphize have a difficult time making an emotional judgment as to whether an animal is suffering or experiencing pain. Similarly, they are trained to treat an injury but not to ask how that injury might have occurred. They can also use the help of police investigators to learn how to take documentary photographs of injuries.

Law enforcement officers can help wary veterinarians to demystify court processes. “Help them to understand that the animal abuse is a red flag and we need to keep everyone in our community safe and healthy,” she said. “Let them know there’s no one else who can do what a veterinarian can do.”

She recommended several policy changes:

- Centralizing animal cruelty investigations within law enforcement departments;
- Developing veterinary medical examiner positions;
- Requiring veterinary students to get training in identifying non-accidental injuries;

- Broadening state mandates and protections for reporting suspected animal abuse;
- Helping veterinarians learn how to write reports in plain English and testify in court.

“It’s not rocket science and any motivated veterinarian can learn the principles of veterinary forensics and seek further training,” she said.

“Unexamined dead animals are lost opportunities for prevention. We still have a long way to go in understanding these red flags and the connections between animal cruelty and mass violence.”

INCREASING PUBLIC AWARENESS ABOUT THE LINK



The Link (“A Ligaçao”) Comes to Portugal

A groundbreaking international conference brought The Link to some 1,000 in-person and virtual participants in Portugal on July 1 when the national ministry for animal protection brought together 22 multidisciplinary speakers. The all-day event, staged at the Belem Cultural Center outside Lisbon and also live-streamed, featured the overarching theme of how addressing The Link provides a pathway to preventing future violence among animals, children, the elderly, and domestic violence survivors.

Keynote speakers included the National Link Coalition’s Phil Arkow; Elizabeth Ormerod, Chair of the UK’s Society for Companion Animal Studies and Vice President of the International Association of Human-Animal Interaction Organizations; and Gisele Kronhardt Scheffer, a

Brazilian researcher on animal abuse from the perspective of criminology.

A roundtable discussion featured nine speakers discussing what Portuguese participants can do better as a team to improve legislation affecting criminal prosecutions, family and child welfare, and animal protection. The closing session featured a strategic vision for the future. The conference also announced a forthcoming Portuguese translation of [Breaking the Cycles of Violence](#), the Latham Foundation’s Link manual,



From left, Scheffer, Pedroso, & Arkow

While recognizing that not all people who hurt animals go on to hurt other people, Pedroso emphasized that the violence that children may see in their homes doesn’t necessarily stay at home and children can go on to replicate it. Noting that 70% of Portuguese homes have pets, she called animal abuse the “ponto da iceberg” (tip of the iceberg). **“Raising awareness of this topic starts today,”** she said.

Conference organizer Laurentina Pedroso, Animal Ombudsperson for the Portuguese national government since July 2021, designed the event to motivate and instill a warning about the risk of animal abuse among society and professionals working in the field. Her goal is to create multidisciplinary approaches that will bring awareness to the national government and even to a pan-European



Arkow presented on the American experience and how focusing on The Link offers a pathway to preventing future violence. He also presented a more specialized program on practical guidance for veterinarians' effective response to suspected animal cruelty, abuse and neglect.



Gisele Scheffer

Scheffer, a veterinarian and attorney from Porto Alegre, reviewed results of her survey of 1,248 Brazilian veterinarians on the species of abused animals and types of abuse seen in practice. Consistent with studies from other countries, she reported that: companion animals are significantly more likely to be abused than wildlife or livestock; 81% of aggressors are men, usually between the ages of 20-40; 72% of animal hoarders are women; and negligence is more common than physical abuse. With over 38,000 Brazilian women abused every day and only one pet-friendly shelter in Curitiba that receives 40-50 animals each month, she said, **“We still have a long way to go in Brazil; pets are still considered invisible in domestic violence and we need to change this.”**

Ormerod reviewed how Link training for veterinarians, pet-friendly domestic violence sheltering, cross-reporting, case studies, and research in the U.K., the Netherlands and Sweden offer a path forward to preventing future violence. She applied Bronfenbrenner's bioecological systems model to The Link; by understanding an individual's environment you gain a better understanding of that person's situation. She recommended extensive pre- and post-professional Link training for the healthcare, social work, animal care, and judiciary sectors and described transdisciplinary collaborations for networking and cross-reporting. **“I hope you make good use of this information to make a difference for people and animals,”** she concluded.



Elizabeth Ormerod



Sofia Neves, left, and Alice Pereira

Portuguese psychologists Sofia Neves and Alice Pereira described the animal abuse/domestic violence Link. Noting that Portugal domestic violence risk assessments do not yet include asking about pets and that the country lacks temporary housing for pets or inclusion of pets in legal frameworks and restraining orders, they presented studies on how pets can contribute to human well-being and the results of extensive interviews with Portuguese DV survivors. They presented results of studies about how pets can contribute to human health and well-being and offer social support to children and domestic violence victims. For many domestic violence survivors, including those who are suicidal, pets are their only source of emotional support. Abusers' indirect coercion through threats of violence, direct harm to animals, and depriving victims of their pets' supportive companionship serve as barriers to leaving abusive relationships. Pets are **“a natural sedative, a sedative with fur,”** one survivor said.

Forensic psychologist Mauro Paulino described several Link cases perpetrated by adults and juvenile delinquents and called acts of animal cruelty red flags that need to be identified as soon as possible. “Those who perpetrate these crimes against animals have a generalized emotional deficit and emotional detachment. If a person does this to an animal this type of detachment and deficit will be directed to spouses and children and others in close proximity,” he said. **“Child abuse, domestic violence and animal abuse are all intimately linked. The violence to animals is just the tip of the iceberg.”**



Mauro Paulino



Isabel Pires

Veterinarian Isabel Pires described how veterinary forensics can give victims a voice by identifying what happened in cases of animal cruelty and neglect. “We have to do something. We can’t do nothing. We have to look at animal welfare and give a voice to those who are victims of aggression and flag situations that are at risk and this is the moment to do it,” she said. **“We need to listen to what the body of the animal tells us and translate it into words and make these hidden lesions cry out to humanity.”**

Lt. Col. Ricardo Alves, head of the national police’s Nature and Environment Division, said The Link includes not only household pets but also environmental crimes. Last year his agency received 11,000 reports, 4,000 of which involved abuse of household pets – a figure exceeded only by the number of forest fires reported. The agency is working to consolidate its work with municipalities, animal protection organizations, researchers, criminal investigators, and the community at large. **“It’s important to give the animal victims a voice,”** he concluded.



Ricardo Alves

Public Security Police Commissioner Bruno Branco described his agency’s Animal Defense program initiated in 2015. Specialized teams are trained in animal welfare and animal behavior, and a risk assessment form includes a question asking whether the offender has a history of violence against animals. He presented examples of how animals are killed to create fear and terror among human victims and called for more multidisciplinary interventions.



Bruno Branco



Link Awareness Comes to India

Mark Randell, who has been training law enforcement officers on The Link in Ukraine, Moldova and Greece ([See the March 2021 and February 2019 LINK-Letters](#)) has expanded into India. On July 4 he trained 100 attendees at the NALSAR University in Hyderabad, sponsored by the Naturewatch Foundation to bring Link training to police officers and animal groups around the world.

Through Link training, Ukraine and Moldova now have criminal laws recognizing the impact of animal abuse committed in front of children. In Greece, a maximum 10-year jail sentence was handed down for the first time for felony coercive-control animal abuse in a domestic relationship, tragically culminating in murder and a pet dog being killed as part of the subsequent cover up. “To be able to reach India is an exciting opportunity that hopefully will develop from this point,” Randell tells *The LINK-Letter*.

Link Featured in National Radio Broadcast about Federal Legislation



U.S. Rep. Mike Quigley

National Link Coalition steering committee member Steve Dale helped spread the word about The Link on his nationally-syndicated [WGN Pet World radio program](#) on July 11 when he interviewed U.S. Rep. Mike Quigley (IL-05) about the proposed **Animal Cruelty Enforcement Act**. The bill, **H.R. 1016**, would create an Animal Cruelty Crimes Section at the U.S. Department of Justice's



Steve Dale

Environmental and Natural Resources Division. The bill is based on the premise that animal abuse is a potential precursor to other crimes, and has been given particular impetus with the recent mass shootings in Buffalo, N.Y., Uvalde, Texas, and Quigley's nearby neighborhood of Highland Park, Ill. The measure would give federal officials additional resources with which to take animal abuse seriously.

Quigley, a six-term Democrat from the northern suburbs of Chicago, agrees that there is a Link between animal abuse and violence to humans, which ranges from domestic violence to shootings – including mass shootings – and that the issue is bipartisan. The bill currently has 48 co-sponsors.

Quigley, who is active in advancing “red flag” laws, recognizes that “there is a lot to learn” when it comes to understanding the motivations for mass shooters and the possible effectiveness of “red flag” laws that would keep guns out of the hands of potential offenders. “But once we see these red flags we have to act,” Quigley said.

“I think what you're going to see with this, as with any other complicated piece of legislation, is it's going to go through some incarnations as we learn. But what I hope, among all good things that I hope this bill will accomplish when passed, is it's going to help us understand what kind of research we need,” Quigley said. He noted that as more information is learned, it will get passed down to local law enforcement officials, and that people learn that when they see something they say something.

“This is what makes radio fun for me – to impact public policy,” says Dale.

THE LINK in the LITERATURE

ASPCA Extends Deadline for Research Grants



The ASPCA has extended until Sept. 1 its deadlines for applications for four types of multi-disciplinary research grants. The grants will be awarded to universities and institutions working in such fields as criminal justice, law, public policy, public health veterinary medicine, psychology, sociology, social work, and animal behavior.

Funding is available for: Access to Veterinary Care Research, and seed grants for Applied Behavior Research, Cruelty Research, and Psychological Trauma Research. Details about eligibility, organizational standards, evaluation criteria, and timeframes are [available from the ASPCA](#).

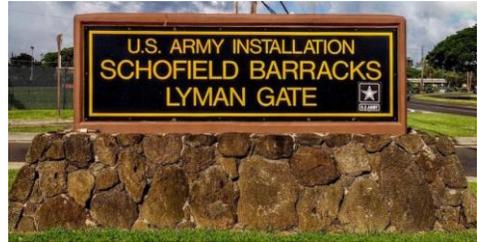
DOMESTIC ABUSE... and THE LINK

Domestic Violence Link a Concern in Spate of Animal Cruelty Cases Among Military

A publication founded to inform active-duty military members, veterans and their families cited The Link between animal abuse and domestic violence and potential serial killers as raising additional concerns about at least three cases where animals were tortured on or near military installations by service personnel.

Task & Purpose reported on “a disturbing trend of animal cruelty reports at multiple US military bases.” The incidents included: two dead and six malnourished dogs found in an airman’s home at Minot Air Force Base, N. Dak.; soldiers shooting cats with blow darts at Schofield Barracks in Hawai’i; and reports of mutilated cats at Nellis Air Force Base, Nev.

In the Minot case, Airman Jim Michael Velez Diaz, 21, and Katelynn Marie Mercier, 19, were each charged with five counts of felony animal cruelty. It was unclear whether their situation is related to incidents of prairies dogs near the base being shot with blow darts.



Air Force security forces have launched an investigation at Nellis AFB where four cats were found cut in half, causing one Chief Master Sergeant to alert base airmen that there “may be some pre-serial killer tendencies going on.”

Army officials in Hawai’i were looking into accusations that soldiers were shooting stray cats with blow darts that they had purchased during a recent training in Indonesia.

“Besides being cruel to animals, such inhumane treatment could also indicate a threat to human community members,” *Task & Purpose* wrote, citing an FBI report (*See the September 2021 LINK-Letter*) demonstrating a well-documented Link that animal cruelty is a predictive or co-occurring crime with violence against humans, including intimate partners, children and elders, and is associated with other types of violent offenses. As time has progressed, an increasing number of fields have acknowledged the correlation and seriousness of animal cruelty and domestic violence, they wrote.



What is The LINK?

Legislation...
Intervention...
Networking...
Knowledge...

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

\$41 Million Colorado Funds Can Assist Animal Survivors



A new law enacted in Colorado is creating a special \$35,000,000 crime victims fund, plus a \$6,000,000 domestic violence and sexual assault services fund, that will award grants to non-governmental or Indian tribe domestic violence and sexual assault programs and coalitions that provide services to crime victims, including “attending to the needs of animal companions.”

Colorado SB 22-183, signed into law on May 19, also changes statutory language from “domestic abuse” to “domestic violence, sexual assault or culturally specific programs.” These agencies’ services shall include “direct advocacy or counseling for persons who are victims of domestic violence or sexual assault, and their dependents, and support for the victims’ animal companions.”

The measure, which had widespread support in both the Senate and the House, was predicated on the proposition that domestic violence and sexual assault can have harmful and lasting consequences for victims, families, communities, the state, and the economy. It emphasizes that underserved populations experience domestic violence and sexual assault at higher rates and face greater challenges in accessing services. Community-based advocates are singled out as being uniquely positioned to offer victims options for services and support the choices that victims make.

The act defines domestic violence as “an act or pattern of behavior in which a person uses or threatens to use physical, sexual, mental, or emotional abuse to control another individual with whom the person is or was in an intimate relationship.” Extensive research and anecdotal experiences confirm that threats or abuse of victims’ animals are frequently used to instill mental and emotional abuse and prevent victims from leaving.

The measure encourages domestic violence, sexual assault and culturally specific programs to develop, implement or enhance coordinated community response teams. It is hoped that many of these teams would include animal care and control and human-animal bond organizations.

SOCIAL WORK... and THE LINK

Missouri Link Training Eligible for Social Work CEUs

The [Missouri Alliance for Animal Legislation](#) will conduct an all-day [Safer Together workshop](#) on The Link, approved for 6.5 CEUs by MO NASW. The event, scheduled for Sept. 30 in Kansas City, will also be accessible virtually. Aislinn McCarthy-Sinclair, Policy & Communications Manager for MAAL, tells *The LINK-Letter* that speakers will include domestic violence and child abuse survivors, a forensic veterinarian, a legislative expert, a humane educator, a state legislator, representatives from a co-sheltering facility, and a representative from the Children’s Division. The free training is co-sponsored by Wayside Waifs, the Animal Welfare Institute, and the Missouri Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers.



September 30th, 8:30am-4pm
Virtual and in Kansas City

You’re a social worker, mental health professional, probation officer, CASA, animal control officer, veterinarian, or humane investigator.

You’ve already suspected that there is a connection between the abuse of vulnerable people and animals - but now you want to know more *and* what you can do about it.

Hear from survivors of domestic violence and child abuse, a forensic veterinarian, legislative expert, humane educator, a co-sheltering facility, and more!

Email Aislinn at aislinn@maal.org to save your spot.



Veterinary Social Workers Can Help Staff, Clients and Public in Animal Shelters

The growing interest in how Veterinary Social Work can be expanded to animal shelters (*See the [October 2020 LINK-Letter](#)*) received greater exposure when the Association of Prosecuting Attorneys conducted a webinar on “Veterinary Social Work and Animal Cruelty Cases.” Kelly Bremken, the Oregon Humane Society’s first veterinary social worker, noted the novelty of this aspect of social work and its importance. “By helping pets I’m doing a great job for the world but if I’m helping people to help their pets I’m doing a great job as well,” she said.



Kelly Bremken

Bremken described the relevance for animal shelters of the macro and micro aspects of the four pillars of veterinary social work: client pet loss and grief management; staff compassion fatigue and conflict management; animal-assisted interventions; and The Link between animal abuse and human violence.

In an animal shelter environment, Bremkin said there are three primary types of VSW clients:

- **Helping the public** with resources, referrals, and coping with pet loss and grief. This includes: continually updating lists of pet resources and pet-friendly housing options; finding pet food banks; referring clients to pet loss support groups, mental health agencies or aging services that they may not know about; and helping them qualify and apply for those programs.
- **Helping the community** with pet issues, such as co-sheltering with pets in domestic violence and homelessness situations, and with tenants’ rights. She works with clients who need financial assistance for emergency pet care. Bremken is particularly interested in building relationships with Portland-area social services agencies to encourage them to include questions about animals in their initial client assessments. Many agencies are working in silos and are unaware of the human-animal bond and the humane society’s programs, she said. “If there’s a group that I can talk to to get their attention, I’ll show up with puppies and kittens and doughnuts.”
- **Helping the staff** by normalizing wellness in an emotionally charged environment immersed in suffering and loss daily. She conducts coaching and counseling, referrals and debriefings to cope with the vicarious trauma, compassion fatigue and turnover endemic in the industry. “When you work in an environment that’s highly emotional, conflict and compassion fatigue run high,” she noted. While a veterinary social worker can’t control the flow of trauma that crosses an animal shelter worker’s path, she can offer resources to help that staff member build resilience. Getting full institutional support for this work is critical, she said. “If you’re asking people to practice wellness it’s worthless if it’s in an environment that doesn’t support it systemically.”

Putting veterinary social workers in animal shelters is still a novel concept; Bremken estimates there are fewer than 15 individuals now, compared to 80-100 in veterinary facilities across the U.S. and Canada. It’s a growing field and “we’re like unicorns right now,” she said. But despite the fact that most social workers have yet to recognize the significance of the human-animal bond, Bremken believes that applying the social work skills and mindset in animal-based environments is a great fit for the social work ethic. “I like to improve the lives of people so I can improve the lives of their pets,” she concluded. “I want to help you to be the best pet owner you can be.”

Submissions Sought for Book on Human-Animal Social Work

[Lori Kogan](#) in the College of Veterinary Medicine at Colorado State University is inviting social workers to submit first-person experiences for a book she is editing, *"Careers in One Health: Social Workers' Roles in Caring for Humans and their Animal Companions,"* for social workers who want to be involved in human-animal interactions. Chapter proposals will be accepted until Aug. 31. The chapters will be short autobiographical pieces and will cover such topics as:

- Your story, background, and school and work experiences.
 - Your interest in the field.
 - What you do during an average day.
 - Best/most rewarding parts of your job.
- Challenges with your job.
- Advice/words of wisdom.
- Core competencies and skills needed to get a similar job.
- Recommended readings and websites for more information.
- Compensation and employment outlook for the future.

Submissions are invited by authors in the following career categories:

- Veterinary social work.
- Animal assisted intervention.
- Animal organizations (support for employees/volunteers, e.g., animal shelters).
- Human service organizations (support for employees/volunteers, e.g., domestic violence shelters, hospitals, etc.)
- The inclusion of human-animal interactions/bond into social work practice.

CHILD MALTREATMENT... and THE LINK

Study Examines Canadian Animal and Child Sexual Abuse



Monique St. Germain (left) and Debra Danco

A forthcoming study from the Canadian Centre for Child Protection will report that a significant proportion of Canadian child sexual abuse cases involve either the sexual violation of an animal or the possession of one or more recordings or writings focused on animal sexual abuse.

The study involved a review of all reported criminal case law where an individual recorded the sexual abuse of a child in person (as opposed to webcam). Several cases involved multiple offenders, invariably one male and one female.

Preliminary findings were reported by co-authors Monique St. Germain and Debra Danco, in the Saskatchewan SPCA's Violence Link Webinar Series. "Animal Sexual Abuse in the Context of the Production of Child Sexual Abuse Material -- A review of Multiple Offender Cases" raised awareness of the observed Link between the production of child sexual abuse material and animal sexual abuse.

The study also identified factors that appear in multiple offender scenarios that involve some form of animal sexual abuse as well as the production of child sexual abuse material, and offered recommendations for policy makers and those who investigate child or animal abuse cases.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE... and THE LINK

NCJFCJ Conference and Delaware Initiative Advance Link Training

Two Link programs were featured at the National Council of Juvenile & Family Court Judges' 85th Annual Conference in Reno, Nev. in July, continuing to raise awareness among judicial officials of the significance of the human-animal bond and animal abuse in the cases that come before the bench. The programs were sponsored by the Animal Legal Defense Fund.



Jennifer Ranji



Rosa Figarola

Judges Jennifer Ranji of Delaware and Rosa Figarola of Florida conducted a breakout session on “The Obvious LINK: Judicial Leadership at the Nexus of Animal Abuse and Family Violence.” They explained The Link between animal cruelty and family violence and provided an example from Delaware of judicial leadership in promoting education of the bench and bar on The Link. They shared experiences and efforts underway in Delaware to bring stakeholders from diverse agencies and professional fields together to address The Link in

legislation, policy, training, and public education (*See the [May 2022 LINK-Letter](#)*) and prompted participants to consider what similar activities they could undertake in their states.

They described animal cruelty as “a red flag that other family members are not safe” and “a risk factor for other forms of abuse, crime and violence.” They reviewed the training sessions in April and June that involved a 21-person planning committee which included judges, court magistrates, attorneys, animal shelter/services/welfare leadership, and state agencies addressing domestic violence, family and rehabilitative services, child advocates, and volunteer legal services. The committee has compiled an extensive list of 15 recommended legislative, policy, public education, and training action steps to move Link activity along in Delaware (*See sidebar article*).

Recommended Action Steps from the Delaware Initiative on Animal Welfare, Family Law and The LINK

LEGISLATIVE

- Add animal cruelty to definitions of abuse and relief in civil protection proceedings.
- Add consideration of pets to property division and custody cases.
- Permit cross-reporting.
- Address attorneys’ barriers to reporting.

POLICY

- Add animal abuse histories to child welfare, law enforcement and court questionnaires and screening tools.
- Consider animal abuse as part of a holistic response to household violence; develop protocols for cross-reporting and requesting assistance from other agencies.
- Capture children’s attachments to pets as part of their well-being/normalcy requirements in DFS cases.

PUBLIC EDUCATION

- Develop a Public Service Announcement using the NCJFCJ model and toolkit.
- Write op-eds.
- Develop social media pieces and posters for relevant agencies.
- Consider making The Link part of Domestic Violence Awareness Month events.

TRAINING

- Existence of The Link.
- How to report and how responding agencies (domestic violence, child abuse, animal abuse, elder abuse) request assistance.
- The bond between humans and animals.
- Consider a policy summit and training.



Emily Lewis, Sue Skinner, and Linda Fielder

Linda Fielder and Emily Lewis of the ALDF and child abuse pediatrician Sue Skinner presented a case study of when animal abuse and child abuse intersect. The case involved a bruised, underweight developmentally-disabled 14-year-old girl whose conditions raised concerns in a home which had had been investigated by a humane society agent 10 days previously for a malnourished dog that likely would have died within weeks without intervention.

The father and stepmother pled guilty to a charge of animal neglect, the dog recovered and gained 16 pounds under the Oregon Humane Society's care, and DHS successfully petitioned to have the girl placed in protective custody and foster care, where she gained weight; the parents received court-ordered services and visitation stipulations. The father pled guilty to charges of criminal mistreatment and was sentenced to 45 days in jail, five years of probation, and no contact with the girl without court permission.

They presented participants with calls to action that included: finding veterinarians and animal behaviorists in the community to interpret animals' body language and assess current and past injuries; and locating pediatricians and caseworkers specializing in child abuse and developmental disorders to interpret possible child abuse and neglect. Above all, court officials should ask about animals in children's lives, they concluded.

20% of Intentional Animal Cruelty Co-Occurs with Other Crimes



Lynn Addington, left, and Mary Lou Randour

What is believed to be the first study to correlate the incidence of animal cruelty with other crimes using the FBI's NIBRS database ([See the December 2019 LINK-Letter](#)) is reporting that 20% of intentional animal cruelty cases reported to police – but only 3% of passive animal neglect incidents -- co-occurred with other criminal acts.

The study, conducted by the Animal Welfare Institute and the Department of Justice, Law and Criminology at American University, examined National Incident Based Reporting System data from 2017 and 2018 to differentiate between 8,736 cases of intentional cruelty and neglect, as those two primary forms represent different offending patterns. For the purposes of the study, the researchers commingled three NIBRS categories – intentional abuse, animal fighting, and animal sexual abuse – into “intentional cruelty.”

The study's findings included:

- Male offenders were involved in 53.9% of intentional cruelty cases and 39.8% of neglect offenses. By contrast, women were more likely to be involved in neglect cases (32.3%) versus 12.2% for intentional cruelty.
- 97% of neglect incidents occurred alone, compared to 80% of intentional cruelty incidents.
- Crimes that co-occurred most frequently with intentional cruelty were similarly violent: fatal and non-fatal assault, sexual assault and robbery.

- In both intentional cruelty and neglect reports, two-thirds of incidents occurred in a residence.
- Youths under age 18 were almost seven times more likely to be involved in intentional cruelty than in passive neglect.
- More than one-third of intentional cruelty cases ended in an arrest, compared to one-quarter of neglect cases.

“Cruelty incidents that come to the attention of police are particularly important to study, as they present opportunities for intervention and treatment,” said co-author Mary Lou Randour of AWI’s animals and family violence program. “Research that distinguishes between intentional cruelty and neglect is especially significant because we know that early, recurring physical aggression against animals and anti-social behavior are linked to violent behavior against animals and people that continues into adulthood.”

“Animal cruelty has received growing scholarly attention over the past few decades,” said co-author Lynn Addington, a criminology professor at American University’s School of Public Affairs. “Previous research tended to group both forms of cruelty together, which limited the ability to develop targeted prevention and intervention policies. We hope that our research will help prevent crime and inform policy.”

“Our findings illustrate how important it is for law enforcement agencies to take animal cruelty crimes seriously—both as an animal welfare and public safety issue—and to systematically collect and report incidents to federal authorities,” said Randour.

-- Addington, L.A., & Randour, M.L. (2022, June 6). *Intentional cruelty vs. neglect: New insights on animal cruelty crimes and implications for policy. Criminal Justice Policy Review.* <https://doi.org/10.1177/08874034221098918>

Prosecutors, Police and Veterinarians Receive Training on Importance of Link Collaborations

Some 626 law enforcement, court, probation, parole, victim assistance, and animal welfare officials attended a [Justice Clearinghouse webinar](#) that detailed the legal and veterinary complexities of domestic violence and animal abuse and the importance of cross-reporting and multi-disciplinary collaborations to enhance successful prosecutions for all victims of these Link scenarios.



Robyn Katz

“It’s so incredibly important to recognize the collaborative role of agencies,” said Robyn Katz, Assistant City Attorney for Austin, Texas. “It’s paramount to ensuring successful outcomes in cases.”

Noting that many states have laws that foster collaborations – including cross-reporting with immunity from civil and criminal liability, pet protection orders, therapy dogs in courtrooms, and guardians ad litem and co-sheltering for pets, – Katz emphasized that it’s up to professionals in fields that don’t normally look for potential animal abuse in domestic violence cases.

“Many of these crimes occur without any witnesses other than the victim and the offender so they rely on us to be their eyes and ears,” she said. “Unassuming heroes” who work with people already are skilled and trained to observe their surroundings, take detailed notes and interview clients, all of which

can be applied to a potential animal cruelty investigation. States with laws mandating veterinarians and others to report suspected animal abuse have higher rates of reporting, Katz theorized.

She described how to handle an investigation from the 911 call to the need for bodycams or dashboard videos at the crime scene and having collaborative agencies on officers' speed-dials to get immediate support. Observations, probing questions and photos of animals at the scene taken from various angles can enhance the likelihood of successful prosecutions.

Katz listed several evidentiary, witness and statutory issues that can challenge investigations and prosecutions but encouraged criminal justice officials to work through those challenges. "You took an oath. Just because a case isn't a slam-dunk doesn't mean you should kick it to the curb."

And "The most important person helping you to decide whether to charge this case is your veterinarian. The veterinarian is key," she said, introducing shelter veterinarian Kris Otteman, who told the audience that the veterinarian can connect medical and forensic findings and timelines with the offender's story and help investigators frame their case and decide what questions to ask next.



The veterinarian's role in a crime scene investigation or examination of an animal includes: providing expertise; assessing the animal's condition and describing its pain or distress; reviewing physical evidence; ruling out other causes such as illness or injury; processing the crime scene; helping to prepare warrants; conducting examinations and diagnostics on living and deceased animals; and writing a detailed report with conclusions that can be used to refresh the veterinarian's memory when the case comes to trial.

Otteman presented four case studies where animal abuse co-occurred with such crimes as child abuse and arson. She suggested that prosecutors can contact veterinary colleges, state veterinary associations and Departments of Agriculture to help locate veterinary partners, and prepare these practitioners for what the investigation will entail and how to testify in court.

She emphasized that "It's not the veterinarian's job to be judge or jury, but to provide comprehensive information, evidence and documentation to prosecutors that can bring fairness to an investigation and justice for a victim."

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For Additional Information

Just click on the blue underlined hyperlinks in these articles and it will take you to other websites with additional information about that topic.

A “Tail” of Two Cities Shows Value of Link-based Collaborations



Calgary H.S. cruelty investigator Brad Nichols

Although the cities of Calgary and Edmonton, Alberta are linked by an epic hockey rivalry, they’re also Linked by leadership agencies – one nonprofit, one governmental – that take the enforcement of animal cruelty laws seriously and that illustrate “how protecting animals is also about protecting people.”

That’s the view from Canadian researcher Kendra Coulter, whose [article](#) in Toronto’s *Globe & Mail* on July 26 concludes that “in all communities that recognize how animals and people are both trapped in webs of family violence and want to set a higher standard for animal welfare, the reforms in Edmonton and Calgary drive home the value of thoughtful collaboration.”

Coulter has written extensively about the dangers faced by humane and animal control officers, especially women, and the questions whether animal cruelty enforcement should be a government or nonprofit humane society/SPCA function (*See the [April 2020 LINK-Letter](#)*). She describes the Calgary and Edmonton scenarios as ones in which either model can work – assuming the agencies recognize the need for collaboration to intervene early to protect animals and prevent future violence against people.

Leaders at the Calgary Humane Society developed robust safety protocols for cruelty investigations including: attending known-risk residences in pairs; additional safety equipment and mental health support; increased field communications; and collaborations with a forensic veterinarian and the Calgary Police Service.

Edmonton has a similar approach but based as a public sector responsibility where specialized peace officers within the animal care and control service enforce the province’s Animal Protection Act. A dedicated animal protection unit is housed within the Edmonton Police Services’ serious crimes branch (*See the [July 2021 LINK-Letter](#)*) and collaborates with city peace officers and prosecutors to tailor responses to the severity and specifics of each case.

Charges and convictions in both cities have increased as a result. “First responders in both cities work with animal owners and caretakers to solve and prevent problems whenever possible, but now they have a larger set of resources, justice system supports and communication and diagnostic tools available to respond to cases across the animal harm spectrum because of these commitments to partnership,” Coulter writes.

-- Coulter, K. (2022, July 26). *Tale of two cities shows animal-cruelty laws also protect people.* *Toronto Globe and Mail*, A6.

VETERINARY MEDICINE... and THE LINK

Penn Vet School Dual VMD/MSW Degree to Address Link Issues



The University of Pennsylvania School of Veterinary Medicine is offering a unique One Health [VMD/MSW dual degree](#) to help future practitioners to solve problems – including Link issues – at the interface of animal, human and environmental health.

Because veterinarians interact closely with both animal patients and human clients, they are unique healthcare providers who often must deal with complex case situations that challenge their ability to manage, notes the school. These include clients who are threatening violence and cases of animal abuse and neglect, as well as non-Link issues such as euthanasia decisions, financial constraints and colleagues dealing with suicidal thoughts.

“The unique skills developed in social workers can facilitate the difficult, involved conversations that can console and inform upset clients. And a veterinarian social worker will have a unique perspective and insights into the strains his or her colleagues may face on a day-to-day basis. Their understanding of human and animal behavior can inform meaningful therapeutic programs and policy planning,” notes the school, pointing out numerous career opportunities for veterinarians with social work expertise.

The program welcomes first- and second-year students pursuing interdisciplinary studies in public health, social work, environmental studies, law, and nursing. Students can earn both degrees in 5-1/2 years through a collaboration with Penn’s School of Social Policy & Practice.

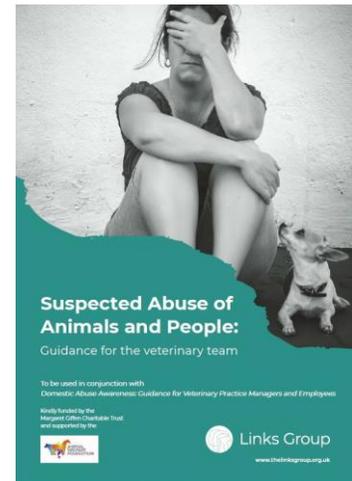
Links Group UK Unveils New Training Pack for Veterinarians

Our British counterpart – [The Links Group UK](#) – has been busy with several exciting new developments. The organization’s new [guidance document for the veterinary team](#) is now live on their website and full resource packs will be available for anyone completing a Links Veterinary Training Initiative session.

The Link Group UK’s new Resource Pack is for veterinary practices to use if they suspect NAI (non- accidental injuries) in pets. They advise practitioners that they may not see NAI cases every day – but that when they do see them it’s important to know how they can help, discuss and decide how they will deal with managing cases of suspected NAI’s.

The pack includes:

- A “How to use” guide
- Suspected abuse of animals and people: guidance for the veterinary team
- Contact card with National Domestic Abuse helpline details
- Pet Snack Club “voucher”. This is a tactic to use if it isn’t safe to give out a contact card; the “voucher” has the National Domestic Abuse Helpline number hidden at the bottom of the barcode. It can be given to anyone in need and kept discretely by them until they are ready to use it.



In other news from the other side of “the pond”:

The Dogs Trust’s Freedom Project was featured on a [BBC News feature](#), “I foster dogs so people can escape domestic abuse”. The Freedom Project provides foster homes to dogs of women fleeing domestic abuse so that they can seek refuge. Launched in 2004, the project has fostered 2,195 dogs, and supported over 1,880 abuse victims.

Endeavour, Refuge4Pets, Cats Protection Paws Protect, and Dogs Trust Freedom Project all offer a pet fostering service to people escaping domestic abuse and are members of the Links Pet Fostering Group. The group meets regularly to share experiences and best practices, as well as agreeing to a set of service standards. The services are strictly confidential to ensure the safety of the pets, the owners, and the volunteers who open their homes and hearts to these pets. As many victim-survivors are also impacted by economic abuse, these services are also completely free to access, with all food and veterinary costs covered.

ANIMAL SEXUAL ABUSE and THE LINK

Article Traces History of Bestiality Legislation and The Link

A new article tracing the history and evolution of laws in the U.S. outlawing bestiality makes the argument that although data establishing a Link between sex with animals and violence against humans are limited and need additional research, demonstrating the Link may be the most convincing and expedient way to advance legislation.

Brian Holoyda, from the Martinez, Calif. Detention Facility, argues that although societies since the earliest legal codes have proscribed sex between humans and animals, many U.S. laws until recently were outdated, vague and used moralistic terminology rather than noting animal sexual abuse’s potential for interpersonal offenses.



Over time, the motivations for laws regulating sex with animals have evolved **Brian Holoyda** from religious or moral convictions to animal rights concerns to, most recently, The Link, Holoyda writes. Although 48 states currently prohibit bestiality, laws vary widely among these states. And while a growing body of evidence suggests that individuals with a history of bestiality may be at risk of engaging in other problematic sexual behaviors, the research is sparse but filling in the research gaps can have a potential positive effect on legislation.

Holoyda notes that the titles of state statutes criminalizing this behavior reflects the era in which these laws were enacted, for example: “abominable and detestable crime against nature” (Rhode Island, 1896); “unnatural intercourse” (Mississippi, prior to 1930); “sexual contact with animals” (California, 2019); and “sexual assault of an animal” (Hawai’i, 2021). Some states criminalizing a “crime against nature” conflate bestiality with male homosexual behavior.

He reviews studies that reported co-occurrence of bestiality and other sexual crimes, such as pedophilia, necrophilia and child sexual abuse, as well as crimes of interpersonal violence. Such research, however, suffers from potentially biased samples by interviewing only individuals convicted of or referred for

sexual offenses and ethical challenges in conducting interviews on the topic; the base rate of zoophilia behaviors and the spectrum of practices involved among a general population are unknown.

Holoyda concludes that, “At best, the research that does exist suggests that individuals with an interest in bestiality likely have a host of atypical sexual interests, some of which may lead to interpersonal offending or the use of problematic pornography.” Despite the research gaps, however, “Encouraging the development and expansion of bestiality legislation by promising potential benefits to humans may be the most convincing and expedient way to achieve such ends.”

-- Holoyda, B.J. (2022). *Bestiality law in the United States: Evolving legislation with scientific limitations. Animals, 12, 1525.* <https://doi.org/10.3390/ani12121525>.

Two New Florida Laws Close Loopholes Affecting Animal Sexual Contact

The State of Florida has enacted two extensive sex crimes bills which incorporate changes affecting sexual abuse of animals.



Florida SB 692 and **SB 1798** were signed into law on June 3 and June 24, respectively. **SB 692** amends the definition of “sexual bestiality” to replace “vagina” with “female genitals” when describing illegal “sexual bestiality” with an animal. It becomes effective Oct. 1.

The more extensive **SB 1798**, a 62-page bill addressing a variety of sex crimes, amends the definition of sexual contact with an animal to close a loophole that previously omitted oral sex with animals. It adds a new prohibition of sexual contact with an animal for “financial gain.” The new law also:

- prohibits advertising, offering or soliciting animals for sex;
- adds a prohibition on possession or distribution of animal pornography;
- increases penalties to a felony level;
- and prohibits future contact with animals for up to five years after conviction.

The normal exemptions for bona fide agricultural, veterinary and accepted conformation judging practices, as are present in other state laws, were similarly included.

The provisions in **SB 1798** were last-minute additions to the omnibus sex crimes bill on the last day of the legislative session. They incorporated key components of **SB 420**, **SB 878**, and **HB 435** which had died earlier in the session. The new law also takes effect Oct. 1.

SB 1798’s other provisions include:

- increasing the monetary damages that an aggrieved person may receive as a result of violations relating to sexual cyberharassment;
- prohibiting the willful and malicious promotion of certain sexual depictions without consent;
- prohibiting a person from possessing or committing theft of sexually explicit images with the intent to promote such images;
- and enhancing the definition of child pornography.

South African Bestiality Case Draws Longest Prison Sentence Ever



Marcelle Meredith

The National Council of SPCAs in South Africa [announced a record-breaking case](#) on April 22 when a man identified only as M. Mofokeng of Soweto was found guilty of raping his neighbor’s dog “Moana” and received an eight-year prison sentence. The NSPCA said this was the highest direct imprisonment sentencing ever imposed for animal cruelty in Africa and will set a nationwide precedent.

The NSPCA said that in 2020, a tenant witnessed Mofokeng “naked and precariously positioned in Moana’s kennel. Having been caught with his pants literally down,” he was apprehended by members of the community.

NSPCA veterinarian Bryce Marock performed a forensic examination on the 11-month-old dog and found injuries consistent with rape. Moana has subsequently made a full recovery. In imposing the sentence, Regional Court Magistrate E. van Niekerk stated that no distinction should be made between the rape of an animal and that of a human.

“Bestiality is a serious concern in our country. It is a shameful crime that is swept under carpets to protect perpetrators – forgetting that bestiality usually progresses to the abuse of children and eventually adult human beings as a later stage,” said NSPCA Executive Director Marcelle Meredith. “Together with the relentless pursuit of this movement, we can bring this evil to its knees.”

NEWS from LINK COALITIONS

Steve Dale Honored Again by AVMA

Nationally syndicated radio broadcaster and animal behaviorist Steve Dale, who serves on the National Link Coalition’s steering committee, will be honored by the American Veterinary Medical Association at its national convention in Philadelphia this August as the first recipient of AVMA’s **Excellence in Media Award**.



Steve Dale

This new award was established by AVMA to honor the achievements of an individual who has contributed to the positive visibility of the veterinary profession by raising public awareness of the important and diverse roles veterinarians play in every facet of the health and welfare of animals, people and the environment. Underscoring Dale’s contributions to the profession, the award will subsequently be named the **AVMA Steve Dale Excellence in Media Award**. Dale was previously honored by the AVMA with the **AVMA Humane Award** in 2002.

“I can’t think of anyone more deserving of this award than Steve,” said AVMA President Dr. Jose Arce. “His knowledge, passion, good humor and dedication to the wellbeing of animals have made him not just a great source for animal and veterinary news, but also a pleasure to work with. For more than 30 years, Steve has been a true champion of our profession and the animals we treat. We are indebted to him for all of his contributions and his service.”

Congratulations, Steve – it’s well-deserved!

Canadian Violence Link Coalition Conducts Webinar in Ontario



Members of Humane Canada's [Violence Link Coalition](#) presented an introductory webinar on The Link to the public at the Oakville & Milton Humane Society in Ontario as part of the humane society's annual "Mission Pawsible" event to raise community awareness. Violence Link Program coordinator Kerri Thomson reviewed how the Link interfaces with intimate partner and domestic violence, child abuse and sexual abuse. She presented examples of coercive control, how to recognize signs of animal abuse, and information on who to contact if abuse is suspected.

THE LINK... IN THE LEGISLATURES

Although many state legislatures have adjourned for the year, growing awareness of The Link between animal abuse and human violence has already resulted in **153 bills** introduced in state legislatures and the U.S. Congress – **15 of which** have already been signed into law! Here are the ones that we know of so far; please [let us know](#) of any legislation not included in this list:

Current Link Bills We're Watching:

Domestic Violence/Pet Protection Orders



U.S. H.R. 2377, the Federal Extreme Risk Protection Order Act of 2022, would allow family members, domestic partners and law enforcement officers to petition for a "red flag" federal Extreme Risk Protection Order prohibiting a respondent to acquire firearms or ammunition when there is cause to believe the respondent poses a risk of imminent personal injury to self or another individual. In determining whether to issue an ERPO, courts shall consider factors including a recent act of animal cruelty by the respondent. The bill has passed the House and is in the Senate Judiciary Committee.



Arizona HB 2365 died in committee when the Legislature adjourned. It would have allowed victims to petition a court to issue a severe threat order of protection against an individual who committed cruel mistreatment of an animal; such an order would have prohibited the respondent from possessing a firearm.



California SB 344 and SB 513 would require the Department of Housing and Community Development to develop and administer a program to award grants to shelters for the homeless to provide shelter, food and basic veterinary services for residents' pets. Both bills are the Assembly Appropriations Committee. (It is not clear whether these bills would cover homeless persons who are fleeing domestic violence.)



Colorado HB 22-1041 was signed into law on March 24. It adds animal control officers and State Bureau of Animal Protection employees to the "protected persons" who, if they are victims of domestic violence or sexual assault, can petition to have their personal information removed from official records to reduce an imminent and serious threat to the safety of the person or the immediate family.





Colorado SB 22-183 was signed into law on May 19. The law creates a \$35 million Crime Victim Services Fund and a \$6 million Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Services Fund to award grants to non-governmental or Indian tribe domestic violence and sexual assault programs and coalitions that provide services to crime victims, including “attending to the needs of animal companions.”



Delaware HS1 for HB 264 would allow a person over age 18 who has been the victim of non-consensual sexual conduct or sexual penetration, including with an animal, to apply for a sexual violence protective order if the person has a reasonable fear that the perpetrator will harm the petitioner in the future. A sexual violence protection order would be available only for victims lacking a family or dating relationship with the perpetrator, as they can already request a protection from abuse order. The bill was sent to the Governor on June 23.



District of Columbia B24-0560 would modify the pure property disposition of a pet in a divorce so that the court could assign sole or joint ownership of a pet based upon the care and best interest of the animal. The measure is in the Committee on Judiciary and Public Safety.



Florida HB 121 died in committee. It would have defined the felony crime of aggravated animal cruelty to include causing great bodily harm, permanent disability or death to an animal while perpetrating sexual battery, domestic violence, aggravated stalking, aggravated child abuse, or aggravated abuse of an elderly or disabled person. It would also pertain to the unlawful killing an animal belonging to another family or household member and “evincing a depraved mind.”



Hawai’i SB 2396 and HB 2209 died when the legislature adjourned. The bills recognized that children residing in homes marked by domestic violence are also psychologically harmed and more likely to externalize antisocial behaviors. They would have granted children standing to file a petition for an order of protection or temporary restraining order (which could have included pets).



Illinois HB 1907 would require the Department of Human Services to establish a grant program, incorporating third-party funding and services, for counties with populations greater than 200,000 to support domestic violence shelters and service programs that assist domestic violence survivors’ pets. The bill is in the House Rules Committee.



Illinois HB 4368 would expand the definition of domestic violence abuse to include “coercive control behavior,” a pattern of behavior that unreasonably interferes with a household member’s free will and personal liberty, including committing or threatening to commit intimidating cruelty to animals. The bill is in the House Rules Committee.



Indiana HB 1137 was signed into law on March 18. It provides that orders for protection (which include protecting pets from the respondent) will be enforced indefinitely if the respondent is required to register as a lifetime sex or violent offender.



Indiana HB 1370 died when the legislature adjourned. It would have required the state Office of Judicial Administration to establish a domestic violence registry for individuals convicted of domestic violence or who is subject to an order of protection; Indiana already includes acts of cruelty to a family member’s animals as a “crime of domestic violence.”



Iowa HF 825 became law on May 2. The new law amends domestic violence protection orders (which can include pets) and consent agreements to allow courts to approve a consent agreement without a finding that the defendant has engaged in sexual abuse.



Kentucky HB 319 was signed into law on April 8. It includes violence against an animal when used as coercive conduct within the definition of “domestic violence and abuse” and “dating violence and abuse” and allows judges in both types of cases to award possession of a shared domestic animal to the petitioner.



Kentucky HB 709 died in committee. It would have denied offenders convicted of first-degree abuse of a dog or cat from being released on probation until they had served at least 50% of their sentence if the animal abuse was committed as part of domestic violence or in the presence of a minor child; such acts of animal cruelty would have been classified as Class D felonies.



Maine LD 1696 was signed into law on April 20. It expands Maine’s statutes (the oldest in the U.S.) allowing courts to direct the care, control and custody of pets in protection-from-abuse orders to further prohibit defendants from possessing any dangerous weapons if the defendant’s abuse includes killing or threatening to kill any animal in the household. The recodified statute is based upon the recognition of domestic abuse as a serious crime against the individual and society that produces an unhealthy and dangerous family environment that is not conducive to healthy childhood development.



Massachusetts S.939/H.1820 would expand existing provisions that prevent respondents in a domestic violence protection order from harming, taking or disposing of household animals to also include protective orders issued in sexual assault harassment cases. The bills are in a study order requested by the Senate Rules Committee.



Mississippi SB 2022 died in the Senate Judiciary Committee. It would have allowed courts in issuing protection orders to order respondents to not harm, abuse, transfer, or dispose of any companion animal, and to grant possession of companion animals to the petitioner.



New Jersey A4229/S 1789 would expand the statutory definitions of domestic violence, child and elder abuse, and abuse of persons with a disability to include acts of animal cruelty against those persons’ animals. The bills are in the Assembly Agriculture & Food Security and Senate Environment & Energy Committees.



New York A1353 would make it a crime to unjustifiably injure or kill a companion animal to threaten, intimidate or harass another family member. The penalty would be increased if the act occurs in the presence of a child. The bill is in the Codes Committee.



New York A3724 would amend existing provisions which allow courts, during a divorce proceeding, to award custody of pets in the animals’ best interests to also allow courts to require the parties to properly care for animals prior to the court’s determination of ownership of the animals. The bill is in the Assembly Judiciary Committee.



New York A510/S3039 would expand existing domestic violence pet protection orders to allow courts to grant petitioners exclusive care, custody and control of animals and to order respondents to stay away from the animals or take, transfer, harm, or conceal the animals. The bills are in the Assembly Judiciary and Senate Children & Families Committees.



New York A3985 and A10013 (“Bella’s Law”) would require the Office of Children & Family Services to investigate possible domestic violence or abuse for persons who have been accused of animal abuse. The bills are in the Assembly Children & Families Committee.



New York A8865 would expand provisions in residential programs for domestic violence provisions which allow them to have service animals and therapy dogs to also include companion animals. The bill is in the Assembly Social Services Committee.



Oklahoma SB 1446 died when the Legislature adjourned. It would have expanded the definition of “domestic abuse” to include “coercive control,” defined as unreasonably engaging in numerous acts including committing or threatening to commit cruelty to an animal that intimidates a family or household member.



Pennsylvania HB1031 would amend the Protection from Abuse Act to allow courts to grant temporary ownership rights over companion animals in protection orders and direct defendants from possessing, contacting, attempting to contact, transferring, or relocating companion animals or entering the property of anyone sheltering the animal. Final agreements would allow courts to direct defendants to not abuse, harass, stalk, threaten or use physical force against the animal. The bill is in the House Judiciary Committee.



Pennsylvania HB 1903 would allow courts to issue an Extreme Risk Protection Order barring an individual from possessing a firearm upon a finding that the person presents a substantial risk of suicide or death or serious bodily injury to another person; factors which may be used to determine the individual’s risk include a history of domestic violence or animal cruelty. The bill is in the House Local Government Committee.



Rhode Island H7087 would create a custody procedure for domestic companion animals in divorce and separation proceedings based on the best interests of the animal. The bill passed the House and was referred to the Senate Judiciary Committee.



Rhode Island HB 7573 would allow a person who possessed a pet while cohabiting with another person to seek equitable relief relating to contested ownership of the pet; district courts could consider the well-being of the pet in making a determination of ownership. The court could not award joint ownership, visitation privileges or financial support and could award ownership to an animal welfare organization if the court found that neither of the previously cohabiting parties could provide a safe and appropriate living environment for the pet. The bill House Judiciary Committee requested it be held for further study.



Rhode Island H7088 would expand the existing law, which allows family courts to include household pets in domestic violence protection orders, to allow courts to award custody of the pets to the plaintiff and to order an enforcement remedy of a restraining order or other injunctive relief if necessary. The House Judiciary Committee requested it be held for further study.



Rhode Island H 7360 was withdrawn at the sponsor’s request. It would have modified the definition of domestic abuse to include “coercive control” of another person, a pattern of behavior that unreasonably interferes with a person’s free will and personal liberty, including committing or threatening to commit cruelty to animals that intimidates.



Utah HB 175 was signed into law on March 22. The measure modifies the definition of “emotional distress” related to the offense of stalking to include mental or psychological suffering resulting from harming an animal, and includes pets in dating violence and cohabitant abuse protection orders.



Virginia HB 713 was deferred until 2023 when the General Assembly adjourned. It would have defined “coercive control” for the purpose of issuing family abuse protective orders as a pattern of behavior that unreasonably interferes with a person’s free will and personal liberty, including committing or threatening to commit cruelty to animals that intimidates the other party.



Washington HB 1901 was signed into law on March 31. The new law adds “coercive control,” including harm to someone’s pets, including by physical violence, to the definition of domestic violence. It takes effect July 1, 2022.



Animal Abuse and Child Maltreatment



U.S. H.R. 763, the Child and Animal Abuse Detection and Reporting Act, would amend the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) to require that data collected by the federal government from state child protection agencies include information about animal abuse as a risk factor for child abuse. The bill is in the House Committee on Education and Labor.



H.R. 4159/S.2121, the Courtroom Dogs Act, would develop best practice guidelines for the use of dogs in federal courts and grand jury rooms to provide support for defendants, complainants and witnesses. The bills are in the House and Senate Judiciary Committees.



Arizona HB 2324 was signed into law on April 14. It makes it a Class 1 misdemeanor to allow a minor to attend an animal fight or cockfight or any facility where preparations are being made for an animal fight or cockfight.



California AB 2274 would change provisions regarding mandated reporters, which include animal control and humane society officers and veterinarians. Current law makes the intentional failure to report suspected child abuse or severe neglect a misdemeanor. The bill would allow a case involving the failure to report suspected child abuse or neglect to be filed within one year, and not later than four years, after the offense. The bill passed the Assembly and was sent to the Senate Appropriations Committee.



California AB 2085 would change existing law, which requires professionals, including animal control and humane society officers, who re mandated to report suspected child abuse and neglect, to report only suspected child abuse and “severe” neglect. “Severe neglect” would be defined as willfully causing or permitting harm or injury to a child or putting the child in imminent danger. The bill passed the Assembly and is in the Senate Committee on Public Safety.



Florida HB 121 died in the Justice Appropriations Subcommittee. It would have defined the 3rd-degree felony crime of aggravated animal cruelty to include causing great bodily harm, permanent disability or death to an animal while perpetrating aggravated child abuse, sexual battery, domestic violence, aggravated stalking, or aggravated abuse of an elderly or disabled person. Aggravated animal cruelty would also pertain to the unlawful killing an animal belonging to another family or household member and “evincing a depraved mind.”



Florida HB 435 died in the House. It would have made it a 3rd-degree felony to cause or allow a minor under age 18 to attend an animal fight.



Kentucky HB 709 died in committee. It would have denied offenders convicted of first-degree abuse of a dog or cat from being released on probation until they had served at least 50% of their sentence if the animal abuse was committed as part of domestic violence or in the presence of a minor child; such acts of animal cruelty would have been classified as Class D felonies.



Massachusetts H.1716/S. 2672 would expand the ability of Department of Children & Families employees and contractors to report suspected animal abuse. Current law allows them to report “during any investigation or evaluation.” These bills would allow them to cross-report at any time. The bills are in the Senate Ways & Means Committee.



Massachusetts S.2846 would expand the list of individuals mandated to report suspected child abuse and neglect to include all adult employees, volunteers and contractors in animal control. Currently, only animal control officers are mandated to report. The bill is in the Senate Ways & Means Committee.



New Jersey A 4229/S 1789 would expand the statutory definitions of child and elder abuse, domestic violence and abuse of persons with a disability to include acts of animal cruelty against those persons’ animals. The bills are in in the Assembly Agriculture & Food Security and Senate Environment & Energy Committees.



New York A474 and A3726 would increase prison terms for aggravated animal cruelty committed in the presence of a child in order to minimize psychological damage to a still-developing minor’s sense of judgment and ethical conduct. **A474** is in the Agriculture Committee and **A3726** is in the Codes Committee.



New York A1353 would make it a crime to unjustifiably injure or kill a companion animal to threaten, intimidate or harass another family member. The penalty would be increased if the act occurs in the presence of a child. The bill is in the Codes Committee.



New York A748 and S 4130 would define the releasing or failure to control an animal so as to prohibit an agent of a residential facility operated by children and family services as second-degree assault. The bill is in the Assembly and Senate Codes Committees.



New York A1816, recognizing the adverse impact animal fighting can have on a child’s emotional development and potential for antisocial behavior, would make it a misdemeanor to knowingly cause a minor child to attend an animal fight. The bill is in the Assembly Agriculture Committee.

 **North Carolina H 544 died in committee when the legislature adjourned.** It would have made it a felony to permit a person under age 18 to attend or participate in any dog- or cock-fighting.

 **Oklahoma SB 1713 died when the Legislature adjourned.** It would have expanded domestic violence protection orders to include petitions filed by or on behalf of victims of child abuse.

 **Pennsylvania SB 78 (Kayden’s Law – Preventing Abuse in Child Custody Proceedings),** in noting that domestic abuse against a partner, spouse, child or pet can be part of a pattern of emotional and psychological abuse, would allow courts to include a person’s prior conviction for animal cruelty or animal fighting to be considered in determining custody of the child and whether the person posed a threat of harm to the child. The bill passed the Senate and is in the House Judiciary Committee.

 **Pennsylvania HB 1836** would add to the Crimes Code a new crime of “child torture,” which would include physical or sexual abuse, unreasonable confinement or restraint, starvation, and “terrorizing or threatening death or harm to the child, a loved one of the child or a pet or loved object of the child for the purpose of causing significant emotional distress.” It was laid on the table in the House Judiciary Committee.

 **Washington HB 1292 died in committee when the legislature adjourned.** It would have created a new crime of “providing harmful material to a minor” which would include bestiality, excretory functions, or sexual acts that are violent or destructive, including but not limited to human or animal mutilation, dismemberment, rape, or torture.

Animal Abuse and Elder/Disabled Abuse

 **Florida HB 121 died in the Justice Appropriations Subcommittee.** It would have defined the 3rd-degree felony crime of aggravated animal cruelty to include causing great bodily harm, permanent disability or death to an animal while perpetrating aggravated abuse of an elderly or disabled person, sexual battery, domestic violence, aggravated stalking, or aggravated child abuse. Aggravated animal cruelty would also pertain to the unlawful killing an animal belonging to another family or household member and “evinced a depraved mind.”

 **Illinois HB 4368** would expand the definition of abuse of a disabled adult to include “coercive control behavior,” a pattern of behavior that unreasonably interferes with a household member’s free will and personal liberty, including committing or threatening to commit intimidating cruelty to animals. The bill is in the House Rules Committee.

 **New Jersey A 4229/S 1789** would expand the statutory definitions of elder abuse, abuse of persons with a disability, domestic violence, and child abuse to include acts of animal cruelty against those persons’ animals. The bills are in the Assembly Agriculture & Food Security and Senate Environment & Energy Committees.

 **Pennsylvania HB 1681** would impose a 25-year ban on offenders convicted of sexual intercourse with an animal from employment working with care-dependent adults. Facilities covered by the employment ban would include residential care homes, long-term nursing homes, home health care agencies, hospices, adult daily living centers, personal care homes, assisted living residences, and any other public or private organization that uses public funds to provide care to care-dependent individuals. The bill is in the House Committee on Aging and Older Adult Services.

Animal Sexual Abuse



Colorado Ballot Initiative 16, proposed for 2022, “Protect Animals from Unnecessary Suffering and Exploitation” (PAUSE), would amend the state’s criminal bestiality statutes to define “sexual act with an animal” as including penetration, and exempt acts done by persons dispensing care to an animal in the interest of improving that animal’s health.



District of Columbia B24-0560 would close a loophole in the law and would prohibit sexual contact between a person and an animal, including the advertisement, offer of sale, or dissemination of photographs or video footage of bestiality. The bill is in the Committee on Judiciary and Public Safety.



Florida SB 692 and SB 1798 were signed into law. SB 692 amends the definition of “sexual bestiality” to replace “vagina” with “female genitals” when describing illegal “sexual bestiality” with an animal. The more extensive **SB 1798** incorporates provisions that were in **SB 878, SB 420 and HB 435** which had died earlier in the legislative session.



Idaho SB 1325 became law on March 22. It replaces the archaic law against “the infamous crime against nature committed with mankind or with any animal” with a more contemporary crime of “sexual abuse of an animal,” punishable by up to 5 years in prison and registry as a sexual offender. No convicted offenders can be released on parole without a psychiatric or psychological examination and risk assessment. Offenders can be barred from operating a child day care facility.



Kansas HB 2009 and HB 2223 died in committee. The bills would have continued to define sex with animals as “sodomy,” but remove homosexual sex from the definition of sodomy.



Kentucky HB 709 and SB 125 died in committee. They would have allowed peace officers and animal control officers to seize victims of animal sexual abuse.



Louisiana HB 142 was signed into law on June 15 and becomes effective Jan. 1, 2023. The new law allows individuals to sue for damages commercial entities that publish or distribute pornographic materials harmful to minors, including depictions of bestiality. The preamble notes that internet-based pornography “is creating a public health crisis and having a corroding influence on minors.”



Maryland SB 22 died in committee. It would have repealed duplicative Criminal Law statute §3-322, a prohibition against having sex with animals, as similar prohibitions exist in §10-606 as Aggravated Cruelty to Animals.



Missouri SB 980/HB 2446 died when the legislature adjourned. They would have added causing injury or suffering to a female dog, causing injury to the sexual organs of a female dog, and needlessly causing pain during artificial insemination of a female dog to the definition of animal abuse.



New York A614 would make sexual contact with animals a felony if serious injury or death to the animal occurs, require offenders to relinquish all animals, bar them from future possession of animals, and undergo psychological evaluation. It is in the Agriculture Committee.



New York A8647-A/S8027 would increase the penalty for “sexual misconduct,” which includes sexual conduct with an animal, from a Class A misdemeanor to a Class E felony, if the victim is a corrections officer. The bills are in the Assembly and Senate Codes Committees.



Oregon Ballot Initiative 13, proposed for 2022 was withdrawn by the petitioner, It would have added breeding domestic, livestock and equine animals to the definition of sexual assault of an animal.



Pennsylvania SB 354 would add “sexual intercourse with animals” to the definition of “sexual violence” awareness programs that institutions of higher education and private licensed schools must teach. The bill is in the Senate Education Committee.



Virginia SB 249 was signed into law on April 11. The new law modernizes the prohibition against a person who “carnally knows any brute animal” into a more contemporary prohibition of “sexual abuse of animals,” a Class 6 felony, and prohibits convicted offenders from owning any animals for up to five years. Offenders could be ordered to obtain psychiatric or psychological counseling and treatment.



Animal Hoarding



New Hampshire HB 366 defines animal hoarding and sets forth a provision for a person charged with animal hoarding to be given a psychiatric evaluation. The bill has been referred for interim study.



New Jersey S 1144 establishes the crime of animal hoarding and requires mental health counseling for all adult and juvenile animal cruelty and hoarding offenders. The bill is in the Senate Energy & Environment Committee.



New York A1229 would create a violation of companion animal hoarding and allow courts to order mental health evaluations and prohibit possession of animals as penalties to give law enforcement needed tools for early intervention before a situation becomes a full-blown cruelty case. The bill is in the Agriculture Committee.



West Virginia HB 2095 died in committee when the legislature adjourned. It would have defined animal hoarding as the possession of a large number of companion animals, the failure to provide adequate food, water, shelter, veterinary care and humane care, and the inability to understand the conditions of the animals and the deleterious impact on the animals and the owner’s health and well-being. Animals found living under these conditions would be confiscated and turned over to an animal shelter for proper care and relocation.

Psychological Evaluation of Offenders



Mississippi SB 2261 died in the Judiciary Committee. “Buddy’s Law”) would have required youths who have been adjudicated as delinquent for committing cruelty against a domesticated dog or cat to receive psychiatric evaluation and counseling or treatment.



New Jersey S 1144 would establish the crime of animal hoarding and require mental health counseling for all adult and juvenile animal cruelty and hoarder offenders. It is in the Senate Energy & Environment Committee. **S 1153 (“Shyanne’s Law”)** would require mental health evaluation for all animal cruelty offenders; that bill is in the Senate Health, Human Services and Senior Citizens Committee.



New York S230 would require courts to order psychiatric analysis and evaluation of animal abusers and to unseal the records of juvenile animal abuse offenders. **S229** and **A 1558** would require courts to impose psychiatric evaluations for defendants convicted of aggravated animal cruelty. **A 8443** would require courts to order a mental health evaluation for persons convicted of animal fighting or aggravated cruelty to animals. The bills are in the respective Agriculture Committees.



New York A524, S1257 and S1259 would prohibit persons convicted of “Buster’s Law” (aggravated cruelty to animals) from owning pets unless authorized by a court order after appropriate psychiatric or psychological testing determined the person showed clear and convincing evidence of capable and sound mental capacity and ability to properly care for the animal. The bills are in the Assembly and Senate Agriculture Committees.

Cross-Reporting



Connecticut SB 235 was tabled in the Senate when the Legislature adjourned. The bill would have required veterinarians to report to local law enforcement agencies when they treat dogs that they believe have been used in animal fighting.



Iowa SF 2135, HF 2429 and HF 623 died in committee when the legislature adjourned. The bills would have granted veterinarians immunity from administrative, civil and criminal liability, and remove the normal confidentiality requirements, for making good-faith reports or assisting in the investigation of suspected animal maltreatment or rescuing a threatened animal.



Louisiana HB 842 was signed into law and becomes effective Aug. 1. The new law grants veterinarians and veterinary technicians immunity from civil and criminal liability for reporting, in good faith and with reasonable cause, suspected animal cruelty or neglect and for releasing confidential information pursuant to a subpoena, court-ordered disclosure, or with written consent of the animal’s owner or legal representative.



Massachusetts S.2672 would permit child protection workers and personnel protecting elders and the disabled to report suspected animal abuse at any time, rather than just during the course of their investigations and evaluations. The bill is in the Senate Ways & Means Committee.



Missouri SB 1182 died when the legislature adjourned. It would have mandated veterinarians, animal control officers and animal humane investigators to report abuse and neglect of children, the elderly and other vulnerable persons. Certain mental health, educational, protective services, and law enforcement personnel would have been mandated to report companion animal abuse or neglect to a hotline established by the Missouri Animal Control Association. Newly-mandated reporters would have received one hour of training within the first 60 days of employment to recognize the signs of abuse or neglect.



New Jersey A 2709, citing Link research, would require DCF child abuse and neglect investigators to report suspected neglect or cruelty of livestock and non-livestock animals, with good-faith immunity from civil and criminal liability and administrative sanctions. The bill is in the Assembly Human Services Committee.



New Jersey A 4229/S 1789 would require veterinarians, veterinary technicians, domestic violence investigators, employees of the Department of Children & Families, employees of the Department of Human Services, Division of Aging, police officers, and caregivers at residential health care facilities to report suspected animal cruelty to an appropriate law enforcement officer with civil and criminal immunity for reporting in good faith. The bills are in the Assembly Agriculture & Food Security and Senate Environment & Energy Committees.



New York A 5780 and S 7401 would permit mandated reporters of child abuse to report suspected animal cruelty, with immunity from civil and criminal liability for good-faith reports. The bills are in the respective Children and Families Committees.



New York A 5642 would require the Attorney General to establish a 24-hour toll-free animal abuse hotline and make reasonable efforts to inform the public about the hotline, which would then refer reportable incidents to the appropriate state or local law enforcement or SPCA agency. The bill is in the Assembly Governmental Operations Committee.

Court-Appointed Advocates for Animals



Florida S 172 died in the Judiciary Committee. It would have allowed the appointment of an advocate, upon the court's initiative or request, from a list of attorneys and certified legal interns provided by the Animal Law Section of the Florida Bar Association, for "the interests of an animal" in civil and criminal court proceedings regarding welfare, care or custody.



Illinois SB 153 would allow courts to appoint attorneys or law students as special advocates to assist the court in prosecution of cases involving the injury, health or safety of a cat or dog and represent "the interests of justice". Advocates could monitor the case and attend hearings; consult with persons and review records relevant to the conditions of the cat or dog or the defendant's actions; and present information and recommendations to the court. The bill passed the Senate and is in the House Rules Committee.



New Jersey A 1965/S 2211 would create a two-year pilot program to allow courts to appoint a pro bono attorney or law student special advocate to represent the best interests of, and justice for, animals in cruelty cases. It was reported out of the Assembly Judiciary Committee and is in the Senate Environment and Energy Committee.



New York A 5315/S 3525-A would allow courts to appoint volunteer lawyers and law students to advocate for living animals' interests and to help ensure their well-being in civil and criminal animal welfare proceedings. The bills are in the Senate and Assembly Judiciary Committees.



Rhode Island S 2227/HB 7678 would authorize the potential appointment of pro bono attorneys and supervised law students to act as animal advocates in cruelty and abuse cases, at the court's discretion, to serve the interests of justice. The respective Judiciary Committees each recommended the bills be held for further study.

Animal Abuse and Other Crimes



U.S. H.R. 1016, the Animal Cruelty Enforcement (ACE) Act, introduced because of cited Links between animal cruelty and violence against humans, would enhance enforcement of federal anti-cruelty laws, such as interstate trafficking of fighting animals, by creating an Animal Cruelty Crimes Section at the U.S. Department of Justice’s Environmental and Natural Resources Division. The bill is in the House Judiciary Committee’s subcommittee on Antitrust, Commercial and Administrative Law.



Alaska HB 51 died when the Legislature adjourned. It would have allowed criminal courts to impose a sentence above the presumptive range if various aggravating factors are present. Existing law includes a history of repeated instances of cruelty to animals as an aggravating factor; the bill would have added the defendant’s targeting the victim due to that person’s sexual orientation, gender identity or citizenship.



Georgia SB 512 died when the legislative session ended. It would have added cockfighting to provisions of the law outlawing gambling on dog fights and create a “misdemeanor of a high and aggravated nature” to allow a minor child to attend an animal fight.



Illinois HB 3531 would expand criminal code prohibitions of violent video games to include games in which a character kills or causes serious physical or psychological harm to an animal. Psychological harm would be defined as including depictions of child abuse, sexual abuse, animal abuse, domestic violence, and violence against women. The bill is in the House Rules Committee.



Kentucky HB 450 died in committee. It would have required peace officers to receive law enforcement training on the identification, investigation, response, and reporting of animal abuse violations and on The Link between animal abuse and offenses against people, including: abuse, neglect and sex crimes against a minor; child pornography; abuse, neglect and exploitation of a vulnerable adult; and domestic and dating violence and abuse.



Louisiana SB 327 died when the legislature adjourned. The bill would have allowed a district attorney to obtain a court warrant to search for and seize any firearms belonging to a person who recently committed acts of animal cruelty where there is probable cause to believe that the person poses a risk of imminent personal injury to himself or to another person.



Minnesota HF 208 died when the Legislature adjourned. It would have established a Minnesota Companion Animal Board to protect and promote the welfare, social well-being, and physical and mental health of companion animals; one member would “represent public human health and welfare issues and the relationship between companion animal and human health and welfare.”



New Jersey A3841 would prohibit offenders convicted of animal cruelty from possessing a firearm or being issued a permit to purchase a handgun. The bill is in the Assembly Judiciary Committee.



New York S197/A1633 (“Kirby and Quigley’s Law”) would expand aggravated animal cruelty to include harm to a pet during the commission of a felony. The bills are in the Senate Agriculture and Assembly Codes Committees.



New York A558 would prohibit individuals convicted of serious felony offenses against animals from possessing firearms. The bill is in the Assembly Codes Committee.



New York A999/S7876 would prohibit the release of or failure to control an animal with the intent of preventing a police officer or peace officer from performing his or her lawful duties, as assault on a police officer in the second degree, a Class C felony. The bills are in the Assembly and Senate Codes Committees.



New York A2661/S6112 would define animal fighting as a criminal act when referring to enterprise corruption. The bills are in the Assembly and Senate Codes Committees.



New York A7267 would require the prosecutor in each county to appoint an assistant district attorney to oversee the prosecution of crimes against animals. The bill is in the Local Governments Committee.



Pennsylvania HB 1570 (“Cash’s Law”) would allow courts to add a sentencing enhancement in cases of burglary or criminal trespass where a domestic animal is harmed or killed in the course of that crime. The bill is in the House Judiciary Committee.



Pennsylvania HB 2328 would expand the state’s annual grants to local law enforcement agencies to enforce illegal gambling to include investigations of animal fighting and possession of animal fighting paraphernalia. The bill is in the Committee on Gaming Oversight.



Pennsylvania HB 1903 would allow courts to issue an Extreme Risk Protection Order prohibiting persons from owning or controlling a firearm upon a finding that the person presents a substantial risk of suicide or death or serious bodily injury to another person. A history of animal cruelty and/or domestic abuse are among the factors the court may consider in determining whether to issue an ERPO. The bill is in the House Judiciary Committee.



Pennsylvania SB628 would make it a Second-Degree felony to seriously injure or kill a police animal while perpetrating or being an accomplice to a felony crime. The bill is in the senate Judiciary Committee.



Pennsylvania SB 814 became law on July 18 without the Governor’s signature. It is now a 3rd-degree felony to kill or seriously injure a police animal while evading arrest or attempting to escape detention for an underlying felony or misdemeanor, or a 2nd-degree misdemeanor if the police animal suffers bodily injury. Convicted offenders will have to make restitution to the officer or the agency for veterinary bills, replacement costs for the animal, and the salary for the time the handler’s services are lost to the agency.



South Carolina S378 died when the legislature adjourned. It would have required offenders who harm or injure a police dog or horse in the performance of its duties to make full-cost restitution to the law enforcement agency for the replacement of the animal and be subject to increased fine and imprisonment penalties and/or 500 hours of community service with an animal-related organization.



Utah HB 112 died when the legislature adjourned. It would have changed “dog” to “animal” in statutes prohibiting the training or exhibition of animals for fighting other animals, and repeal the cock fighting statute.



Wisconsin SB 536/AB 540 died. The bills would have prohibited offenders convicted of homicide, felony battery, sexual assault, and controlled substance felonies from possessing, controlling or residing with a dangerous dog.

THE LINK... IN THE NEWS

23 Bronx Gang Members Charged in Shootings and Animal Cruelty



DThang Gz

Twenty-three members of the Bronx, N.Y. RPT gang were arrested under a 65-count indictment charging them with conspiracy to commit murder, attempted murder, attempted assault, criminal possession of a weapon, and animal cruelty related to six shootings, one of which injured a rival gang member. The defendants range in age from 17 to 34 and include Daniel Collins, 20, who goes by the name of Bronx drill rapper DThang Gz and has 208,000 Instagram followers. The indictment also includes animal cruelty charges after several RPT members livestreamed themselves killing a pigeon they compared to a rival Crips gang member who invaded their turf. “If we get 100 views we’ll kill it,” said one of the gangbangers, with the bird then beaten to death with a cane on Facebook Live after the audience broke the century mark. RPT is a subset of the Bloods and linked to the Young Gunners, according to the [New York Daily News](#). Bronx District Attorney Darcel Clark called on Bronx rappers to “stop using music to encourage shootings and use it to better the community.”



Mary Harrison

Wife Gets Probation for Killing Husband Who Beat Their Cat

A Dallas, Texas woman who so feared for her own life that she killed her husband after he beat their cat was sentenced to five years’ probation as part of a plea agreement. Mary Harrison, 51, got a gun and shot and killed her husband, Dexter Harrison, in June, 2018. She had been indicted by a grand jury for felony murder, but pleaded guilty to a reduced charge of manslaughter. [KRLD Radio](#) said the cat, named “Smokey,” had a broken jaw and broken ribs but survived.

Homicide Suspect Charged with Shooting U.S. Marshal and K-9



Tarrion Johnson

A 19-year-old Chicago man was being held without bail for allegedly shooting a U.S. marshal and his police dog. The [Chicago Sun-Times](#) reported that Tarrion Johnson is accused of the shootings which occurred while the unnamed marshal from the Great Lakes Fugitive Task Force was attempting to serve Johnson with an arrest warrant for a previous murder charge. The marshal was shot in the hand from a “ghost gun” – an unregulated firearm – but refused hospital treatment; the wounded K-9 was taken to a veterinary clinic, where its condition was unknown. Johnson was charged with attempted murder, attempted armed robbery, aggravated animal cruelty, and injury to a police animal. A Cook County judge denied bail, stating that Johnson posed a threat to the public.

Utah Man Charged in State and U.S. Courts for “Crush Video” Torture of Guinea Pigs

A Woods Cross, Utah, man who was already facing state animal cruelty charges for allegedly filming and torturing guinea pigs – and who had reportedly posted “Somebody help me before I kill everyone else” among other online comments to his 18 YouTube videos of the abuse – was arrested on federal charges of violating the PACT (Preventing Animal Cruelty and Torture) Act. Investigators said that Samuel Jonas Webster, 18, was indicted by a federal grand jury on 23 counts relating to the depiction of animal cruelty. The [Deseret News](#) reported that Webster allegedly purchased three guinea pigs from Utah pet stores and created the extremely graphic videos of torturing and dismembering the guinea pigs. “Killing and torture is my favorite activity,” he wrote online, and “Torture is like a drug to me, it’s very addicting. Hearing the scream of pain is so satisfying.” The YouTube channel has since been taken offline. Webster reportedly also established an online chat called Discord, also now disabled, that “sexualized individuals under the age of 18,” and visited website domains relating to rape, according to investigators.



The federal PACT Act, passed in 2019, expanded existing federal law which made the distribution of “crush” videos illegal to also include the acts of animal cruelty and torture themselves illegal. There have been several recent federal prosecutions under the expanded “crush video” law, including Krystal Scott, 19, of Kokomo, Ind. ([See the March 2021 LINK-Letter](#)), and Angel Ramos-Corrales, 19, of Riverside, Calif. ([See the May 2021 LINK-Letter](#)). Ashley Richards, 24, of Houston, Texas, is believed to have been the first person convicted under the original law when she was sentenced in 2015 ([See the October 2015 LINK-Letter](#)) for an incident that occurred in 2012.

RCMP Officer Charged with Human Trafficking and Animal Cruelty

A Royal Canadian Mounted Police officer who allegedly arranged for a Mexican resident to come to Ontario for a job opportunity was charged with human trafficking, forgery, possessing a prohibited device, and animal cruelty for allegedly putting the victim into forced labor under very poor working conditions. [The CBC](#) reported that Constable Israel Yabsif Mane Monter, 44, a member of the RCMP’s Toronto North Transnational Organized Crime Unit, was charged when the victim came forward to other officers. The victim was allegedly made to work at a residence in Georgina, Ont. It was not specified what acts constituted possible animal cruelty but Provincial Animal Welfare Services was called in to investigate further and care for the animals linked to the case. Police say there may be additional victims who Mane Monter brought to Canada under false pretenses.



Israel Mane Monter

Corrections Officer Charged with Killing Girlfriend’s Puppy

An off-duty New York City corrections officer was charged with burglary, criminal mischief, aggravated animal cruelty, and criminal trespass for reportedly breaking into his girlfriend’s home and killing her Maltese pup. The [New York Post](#) reported that Brandon Pearce, 27, entered the home of his 28-year-old girlfriend during the late night or early morning; when the woman returned home at 2:30 a.m. she found the dog bleeding from the nose and mouth before it died. Pearce worked as a corrections officer at Rikers Island.

Neighborhood Dispute Over a Dog Leaves Two Dead and Infant Orphaned



Christina Dang & Chase Garrett

Two people in Hartford, Conn., were killed – and their six-month-old child was orphaned – in what police said was a neighborhood dispute over a dog. The [Hartford Courant](#) reported that Christina Dang, 27, and Chase Eugene Garrett, 39, were shot and killed on June 19; another woman was shot and reported to be in critical condition. Police identified a person of interest in the case who had not yet been identified. The child was placed in DCF custody and the dog was placed with a neighbor. Mayor Luke Bronin said the majority of Hartford’s 20 homicides in 2022 have resulted from minor

personal disputes “escalating with incredible speed into violence and the presence of guns then turns those disputes fatal.”

Sadly, neighborhood disputes over pets often turn fatal. Recent issues of *The LINK-Letter* have included the following accounts of suspects being charged:

- **May 2022: Salisbury, Mass.:** Three shoot neighbor’s dog that attacked their duck.
- **May 2022: Cleveland, Texas:** Neighbor shoots owner of stray dog.
- **Oct. 2020: Cleveland, Ohio:** 80-year-old neighbor shoots neighbor over dog complaint.
- **Aug. 2020: Port St. Lucie, Fl.:** 82-year-old neighbor goes on shooting rampage over dangerous dog that leaves three dead.
- **April 2019: Providence, R.I.:** Woman stomps neighbor’s ferret and poisons her dog to exact payback.
- **Aug. 2018: Lithonia, Ga.:** Ongoing dispute over neighbor’s dog leads to murder.
- **Aug. 2017: Des Moines, Iowa:** Man breaks neck of his neighbor’s girlfriend’s dog in dispute over wi-fi network
- **Sept. 2017: Oceanside, Calif.:** Man poisons, burns and attacks neighbor’s two dogs.
- **Feb. 2017: Spring, Texas:** Man shoots and kills neighbor woman for kicking her dog.
- **Sept. 16: Houston, Texas:** Neighbor shot in neck for beating his barking dog.
- **Oct. 2013: Phoenix, Ariz.:** Neighbor disturbed by barking dogs goes on shotgun rampage and kills four neighbors and two dogs.

Man Charged with Killing and Abandoning Girlfriend’s Poodles

An Asbury Park, N.J. man who allegedly killed one of his girlfriend’s toy poodles and abandoned the other was charged with third-degree Animal Cruelty Resulting in Death and Abandoning a Domestic Animal, a disorderly persons offense. Nicholas C. Winter, 35, was charged in the death of “Bentley” and the abandonment of “Sophia,” dogs that were 12 and 14 years old, respectively. Acting Monmouth County Prosecutor [Lori Linskey announced](#) that Asbury Park police and the Monmouth County SPCA



“Bentley” and “Sophia”

investigated following an argument during which Winter repeatedly texted his girlfriend threatening the welfare of her dogs while she was at work. A necropsy later performed on Bentley determined that he had died due to blunt-force trauma. Sophia was reported missing, but found in the area several hours later. “We take animal cruelty cases extremely seriously in Monmouth County. Taking the life of a defenseless animal as a means to emotionally traumatize its owner is reprehensible and tragic,” Linskey said.

What's Going on with Domestic Violence and Poodles in Las Vegas?



Jonathan Littleton

Poodle Killed Because Woman Wouldn't Have Dinner

Jonathan Littleton, of Las Vegas, Nev., was arrested for allegedly kicking and killing a woman's 15-year-old poodle because she didn't have dinner with him. [KLAS-TV](#) reported that Littleton was charged with torturing/maiming/killing an animal to threaten or terrorize and was released from the Clark County Detention Center after posting \$3,000 bail. He was ordered to stay out of trouble and not contact the woman.

Man Faces Murder, Arson and Cruelty Charges in Death of Infant Daughter

Clarence Martin, Jr., 32, of Las Vegas, was scheduled to appear in court on June 27 for a jury trial for the murder of his infant daughter, who was thrown to her death off a second-story balcony last October during a domestic dispute. The baby, London Martin, would have turned two months old that week. Martin is also accused of setting fire to the living room of his fiancé, killing his family's poodle, then crashing his car at least three times during a hit-and-run chase that ended at the airport, the [Las Vegas Review-Journal](#) reported. The baby's mother told police that her fiancé had a history of mental issues and had not eaten or slept in the days leading up to his arrest. Martin was charged with murder, arson and animal cruelty.



Clarence Martin, Jr.

Domestic Violence Suspected in Murder-Suicide of 80-Year-Olds that Also Killed 2 Dogs

An apparent murder-suicide in Phoenix, Ariz. claimed the lives of an octogenarian couple and their two family dogs. [KSAZ-TV](#) reported that William Potts, 80, called Phoenix police dispatchers at 3:50 a.m. to say that he had just shot his wife. As the 911 operators tried to get more information from him, they heard another gunshot on the line. Officers arrived to find Susan Potts, 80, and two dogs dead from gunshot wounds; William Potts died later at a hospital. The station reported the shootings may have stemmed from a domestic violence incident.

Man Fleeing Bail Bondsman Charged with Child and Animal Neglect

A man trying to evade his bail bondsman was charged with child neglect, abandoning an animal and failure to appear for a felony offense when he fled from a Walmart in Escambia County, Fla., leaving the dog and child in a hot car. The bail bondsman was attempting to take Deangelo Meriweather, 27, into custody on a warrant when he ran from the store. [WEAR-TV](#) reported that sheriff's deputies eventually located Meriweather and took him into custody. The child was returned to his residence and the Department of Children & Families was notified; animal control took custody of the dog.



Deangelo Meriweather

Mexican Narcotics Shootout Claims 11 Gang Members and Monkey

The Link between animal abuse and Mexican narcotics and crime syndicates surfaced again in June, when [CBS News](#) reported that 11 drug gang members and a spider monkey died in a shootout with police in Texcaltitlan, in the state of Mexico. The monkey was dressed up as a drug gang mascot in a tiny camouflage jacket and a bullet-proof vest and was found sprawled across the body of the dead gunman who was apparently his owner. State prosecutors said that animal-trafficking charges would be considered against the suspects who survived the shootout. Three federal police officers were wounded in the shootout. In March, a drug cartel retaliatory shootout at an illegal cockfight in Mexico left 20 people dead and six injured in the state of Michoacan (*See the [April 2022 LINK-Letter](#)*).



Zoe Saines

Woman Arrested for Beating Wife and Kicking Dog

A Port Charlotte, Fla. woman was charged with allegedly battering her wife and kicking her dog as she was being arrested. [WBBH-TV](#) reported that Zoe Saines, 45, was taken into custody on July 2 for allegedly pushing her wife repeatedly when she refused to go to bed in another room. As Charlotte County sheriff's deputies were taking Saines into custody, she reportedly kicked a small dog on her way out of the home. Saines was charged with domestic battery and "unnecessary torment to an animal."

Man Under Protective Order Charged with Strangulation and Assaulting Dog



Bryan Villanueva

Bryan Villanueva, 29, of Meriden, Conn., was charged with burglary, assault, strangulation, disorderly conduct, and animal cruelty for allegedly forcing his way into a woman's home and attempting to strangle her after her assaulting her dog. The woman said Villanueva, with whom she had previously had a relationship, came to her home uninvited and pushed his way in, according to the [Meriden Record-Journal](#). When her dog started barking, he reportedly punched it twice in the head before attempting to strangle her before eventually leaving. The woman had a protective order against him, police said.

Man Charged with Setting Dog on Fire



Quishon Brown

A Memphis, Tenn. man who allegedly set a dog on fire and threatened to burn down the house of whoever released a surveillance video of the scene was charged with aggravated animal cruelty, setting fire to personal property and assault. Quishon Brown, 43, was arrested three weeks after good Samaritans rushed to the aid of "Queen," who was seen running down the street in a ball of fire. Rescuers said an accelerant was used to set the dog on fire, causing 4th-degree burns over 60% of her body, [Fox13 Memphis](#) reported. Miraculously, Queen is expected to make a full recovery.



"Queen"

LINK TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

NOTE: The pandemic has caused many in-person trainings to be canceled, rescheduled or converted into virtual formats. Click on the underlined hyperlinks for more detailed information.

August 24 – (online): Pennsylvania’s [Keystone Link Coalition](#) will hold its regular monthly meeting.

Aug. 28 – San Diego, Calif.: Katie Campbell of RedRover will present “Healing, Morale and Fundraising: Pet-Friendly Domestic Violence Shelters Helping Survivors” at the 27th San Diego [IVAT International Summit](#) on Violence, Abuse and Trauma Across the Lifespan.

Sept. 18 – Lincoln, U.K. (online): Allie Phillips will present on Sheltering Animals & Families Together (SAF-T) at the [Society for Companion Animal Studies](#)’ annual conference.

Sept. 20 – Kansas City, Mo. (online): Zoë Agnew-Svoboda will present “Navigating Barriers to Safety and Security: Survivors and Pet Placement Advocacy” in a [free webinar](#) for BestyBnB.

Sept. 28 – (online): Pennsylvania’s [Keystone Link Coalition](#) will hold its regular monthly meeting.

Sept. 30 – Kansas City, Mo.: The Missouri Alliance for Animal Legislation will conduct an all-day [Safer Together workshop](#) on The Link, approved for 6.5 CEUs by MO NASW. Speakers will include Andrew Campbell discussing The Link, and Vicki Deisner on the strategy of getting a cross-reporting law passed.

Oct. 4 – Indianapolis, Ind.: Andrew Campbell and Vicki Deisner will Present “Understanding The Link between Animal & Human Violence: How Cross-Reporting Can Save Lives” at the Fall Conference of the [Indiana Coalition Against Domestic Violence](#).

Oct. 6 – Columbus, Ohio: Vicki Deisner, Todd Curtis, and Janet Hoy-Gerlach will present “Ohio HB 33: Required Reporting of Child/Elder Abuse and The Link between Animal and Human Violence” at the [Ohio Peace Officers’ Training Academy Law Enforcement Conference](#).

Oct. 14 – Knoxville, Tenn. (online): Phil Arkow will present “Nine Career Opportunities where Pet-Inclusive Social Work Can Improve Delivery of Family Violence Victim Services” for the 7th International [Veterinary Social Work Summit](#).

Oct. 14 – St. Paul, Minn. (online): Andrew Campbell, Ann Olson, Phil Arkow, Victor Vieth, and others will present on The Link at a family violence conference organized by [Safe Passage for Children of Minnesota](#).

Oct. 18 – New Britain, Conn. (online): Phil Arkow will present “Connecting the Dots in Civil and Criminal Justice: Protecting People by Focusing on Animal Abuse” in a webinar for the [Animal Law Section](#) of the Connecticut Bar Association.

Oct. 21-22 – Alpharetta, Ga.: Phil Arkow and Michelle Welch will be among the speakers at the Animal Protection Society’s [23rd Annual APAW Expo](#).

Oct. 26 – Indianapolis, Ind. (online): Phil Arkow, Vicki Deisner and Andrew Campbell will present at a [training](#) for the Indiana Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers, sponsored by the Animal Welfare Institute.

Oct. 26 – (online): Pennsylvania’s [Keystone Link Coalition](#) will hold its regular monthly meeting.

Nov. 4 – Virginia Beach, Va.: Phil Arkow will present at a statewide [conference on domestic violence](#) for Virginia judges.

Nov. 10 (online): David Rosengard of the Animal Legal Defense Fund will present “Courtroom Animal Advocate Programs: Approaching Animals as Quasi-Party Crime Victims” for the [Justice Clearinghouse](#) webinar series.

Nov. 23 – (online): Pennsylvania’s [Keystone Link Coalition](#) will hold its regular monthly meeting.

Nov. 24-25 – Quebec City, Que., Canada: The Link will be featured prominently at Humane Canada’s 2022 [Prosecution of Animal Abuse Conference](#).

Dec. 28 – (online): Pennsylvania’s [Keystone Link Coalition](#) will hold its regular monthly meeting.



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



ABOUT THE NATIONAL LINK COALITION



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

Members of the National Link Coalition Steering Committee

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