



NATIONAL LINK COALITION

Working together to stop violence against people and animals

The LINK-Letter **Vol. 9, No. 6** **June 2016**

A monthly report of news from THE NATIONAL RESOURCE CENTER



ON THE LINK BETWEEN ANIMAL ABUSE AND HUMAN VIOLENCE



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[Phil Arkow](#), Coordinator and Editor

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June 15 is WORLD ELDER ABUSE AWARENESS DAY

THE LINK AND... CRIMINAL JUSTICE

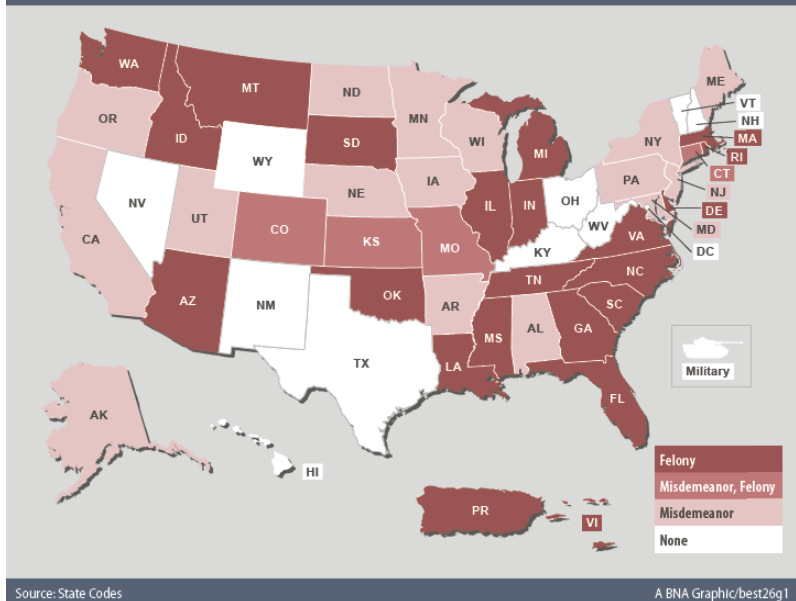
Bloomberg Series Opens the Door on Animal Sexual Assault

Bestiality – a subject long shrouded in taboo – is being brought out in the open. A four-part series in [Bloomberg News' Criminal Law Reporter](#) is citing links between sex with animals and sex crimes against humans – children in particular – as motivating a spirited debate among police and prosecution nationwide and attempts to redefine bestiality in state codes around the country.

Bestiality “is the single greatest predictor of people who will molest children,” Det. Jeremy Hoffman of the Fairfax County, Va., Sheriff’s Office, said.

The series identifies significant challenges in the criminal justice system’s response. States’ definitions of bestiality vary widely. It may be considered a sex offense, a general crime, animal cruelty, or sodomy. Many jurisdictions depend on animal control officers to handle offenses, and many incidents are not investigated by sexual assault detectives, said criminologist Jenny Edwards. Law enforcement’s interests in preventing sexual crimes against humans often get pushback from the agriculture industry’s fear of overreaching animal rights activists. Sexual activity with animals is legal in nine states and the District of Columbia. Little research on the subject is current because most people mistakenly assume bestiality is a rare crime, when in fact it has been occurring underground for centuries.

Bestiality in 50 States, Military & 3 Territories
by crime severity



Forensic veterinarian Martha Smith-Blackmore noted that until recently prosecutors have had problems building successful cases because physical injury to the animal could not be proven.

Citing links between animal abuse and crimes against people, Edwards noted that most people arrested for bestiality have records of child sex crimes or child pornography, a correlation that law enforcement is beginning to take more seriously. Hoffman noted that the vast majority of child pornography cases he has investigated also revealed bestiality porn. Both animal and child sexual abuse arise out of a need for power and control, he said.

The series examines clashes over bestiality laws in New Hampshire, Arizona and Texas. Farmers in [New Hampshire](#), which lacks a bestiality law (*see below*), fear overzealous prosecutors do not fully understand practices such as artificial insemination and would infringe on farmers' ability to care for their animals.

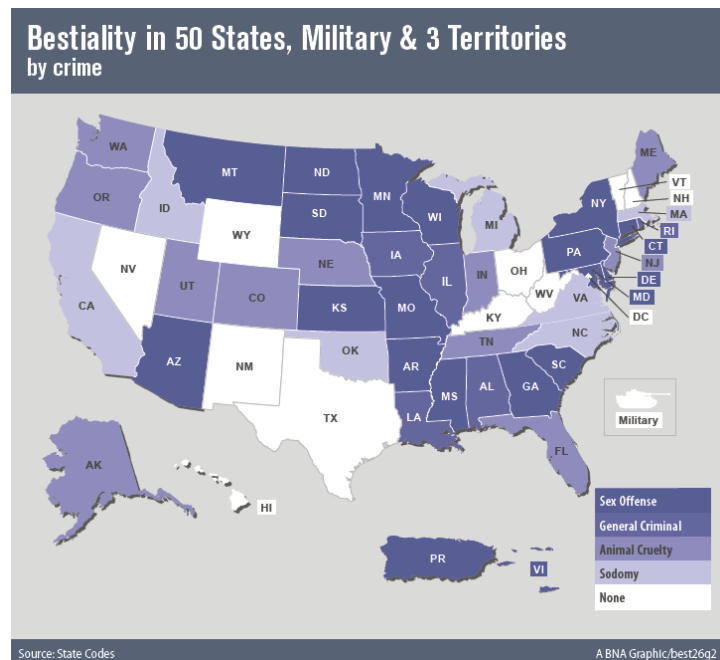
"The sexual abuse of an animal is greatly disturbing and may be indicative of [a] problem which places human beings at risk," Merrimack County Prosecutor Scott W. Murray wrote in a letter of support for New Hampshire's **HB 1547** which would establish bestiality as a felony crime.

The FBI's new inclusion of four types of animal abuse – including bestiality – in its National Incident-Based Reporting System is giving the crime more scrutiny and significance, said Lindsay Hamrick, New Hampshire State Director for the Humane Society of the U.S. "We can't track [bestiality] in New Hampshire if we don't have a ban," she said. "We have nothing to enforce."

Franklin, N.H. Police Chief David Goldstein said he expects the number of animal sexual assault incidents to rise once the public learns about the signs that indicate ongoing abuse, in a pattern similar to what happened when the public became aware of domestic violence and child abuse.

Goldstein also said he regularly encounters human and animal abuse links, including threats by abusers to kill or injure a pet if a child does not submit to sexual abuse. He said his personal veterinarian consistently finds symptoms of animal sexual abuse but does not know where to turn for help. "There's a definite nexus between sex with animals and abuse of human beings," Goldstein said.

[Arizona](#) codified bestiality as a felony 10 years ago following a case in which an elected official walked free after allegedly raping a lamb in his neighbor's barn. Maricopa County Sheriff Joe Arpaio has a 100% conviction rate from 10 individuals who pled guilty since the bestiality law was enacted. Opposition from the agriculture industry is said to be absent in Arizona. Julie Murphree of the Arizona Farm Bureau said that since the enactment of the law there have been no complaints from farmers who felt their interests were threatened.



New Hampshire Poised to Ban Bestiality

As *The LINK-Letter* was going to press, we were awaiting word from New Hampshire, where Gov. Maggie Hassan is expected to sign into law **HB 1547** which would ban animal sexual assault in the Granite State.



The measure, which passed the House on March 10 and the Senate on June 1, would establish the crime of bestiality in New Hampshire, currently one of only 10 states to lack such a law. The bipartisan measure was approved by legislators who accepted testimony demonstrating compelling links between sexual assault against animals and humans.

Gov. Maggie Hassan “Case after case has shown that bestiality has strong ties to pedophilia and child pornography and the FBI has found high rates of sexual assault of animals in the backgrounds of many serial sexual homicide predators,” said Lindsay Hamrick, New Hampshire State Director for the Humane Society of the U.S. “On a popular website used to trade and offer animals, New Hampshire lists seven pages of requests. Legislators heard disturbing testimony of cases in New Hampshire and beyond from veterinary and law enforcement experts.”

The new law will ban all sexual contact with animals, including offering an animal for this purpose. It will require mental health counseling and registration on the sex offender registry for those convicted of this crime. The law will take effect Jan. 1, 2017, as a Class A misdemeanor for a first offense and Class B felony for subsequent convictions.

HB 1547 bill was supported by the ASPCA, Humane Society of the U.S., the NH Coalition Against Domestic & Sexual Violence, NH Police Chiefs Association, NH Federation of Humane Organizations, Animal Welfare Institute, The National Link Coalition and the Animal Legal Defense Fund.

Oklahoma Increases Bestiality Penalty

Oklahoma HB2398, the “Justice for J.W. Act,” was signed into law on May 6 by Gov. Mary Fallin. The new law increases the maximum sentence for a person who forces another person to engage in “the detestable and abominable crime against nature” committed “with mankind or with a beast” from the current 10 years to 20 years.

THE LINK AND... VETERINARY MEDICINE



Inconsistent Story to Veterinarian Leads to Cruelty Conviction

Last June, a veterinarian in Howard County, Md. performing a necropsy on a 2-year-old dachshund named “Daisy” called animal control to report a case of suspected animal cruelty when the dog’s injuries were not consistent with the story that was presented. On May 20, Brandon John Shorts, 23, of White Plains, Md., pled guilty and

Brandon John Shorts was sentenced on May 20 to 90 days in jail for crushing the skull of Daisy, who had belonged to his girlfriend’s family. The veterinarian reported that, in her opinion, Daisy was hit with something extremely hard or was kicked or stomped in the head; prosecutors said Shorts had claimed he kicked the dog away and she fell down the stairs and ran away, [WBAL-TV](#) reported. Shorts was also sentenced to three years of supervised probation, during which time he is to have no contact with Daisy’s owners, to have no pets, and to undergo anger management and counseling.

ANIMAL ABUSE AND... DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Coercive Animal Abuse Identified in Native American Populations

In what is believed to be the first study of its kind to analyze the prevalence of animal abuse employed as a form of psychological aggression among American Indian and Alaska Native victims of intimate partner violence, the [National Institute of Justice](#) (NIJ) has reported compelling statistics.

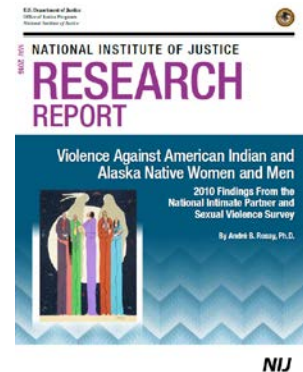
In reporting the prevalence of sexual violence, physical violence, stalking, and psychological aggression, the NIJ reported that 16.8% of Native American female victims and 2.4% of male victims reported that they had experienced threats of having their pets hurt or taken away. The NIJ's measures of psychological aggression by intimate partners include expressive aggression, control of reproductive or sexual health, and coercive control, of which threats to pets comprise one significant criterion.

Key findings of the report include:

- 84.3% of American Indian and Alaska Native women have experienced violence in their lifetime; 39.8% experienced violence within the past year.
- 66.4% of American Indian and Alaska Native women have experienced psychological aggression by an intimate partner in their lifetime; 25.5% had experienced it in the past year.
- Among men, the rates were 73.0% and 27.3%, respectively.
- Among victims, lifetime rates of psychological aggression were 91% of women and 88% of men.
- More than 1.2 million American Indian and Alaska Native women have experienced psychological aggression by intimate partners over their lifetime. They are 1.3 times as likely to have experienced psychological aggression as white women.

Besides threats to animals, other forms of coercive control included:

- Being kept from seeing or talking to family or friends
- Having decisions made for them
- Being tracked by questions about locations and actions
- Threats of physical harm
- Threats of the perpetrators hurting themselves
- Threats or actual harm to loved ones
- Threats of having children taken away
- Being kept from leaving the house
- Having something that was important to them destroyed



The increased risk of violence resulted in significant numbers of men and women who needed medical care but were unable to access such services. Other adverse impacts – including fear for safety, physical injuries and missing work or school – were significantly higher than for white populations.

The report is based on the National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey, conducted in 2010 by the CDC with information from 2,473 women and 1,505 men who identify as American Indian or Alaska Native.

--Rosay, A.B. (2016). Violence Against American Indian and Alaska Native Women and Men: 2010 Findings from the National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice.

Woman and Dog Sleep in Tent When Denied Access to Shelter



The need for domestic violence shelters to become pet-friendly was demonstrated dramatically in Spain recently when a survivor named Ucanca González was denied access to a women's shelter because she has a dog. She and her dog slept in a tent and were guarded 24/7 by two law enforcement officials because they considered her situation especially high-risk. Our Link affiliate in Spain, Observatorio de Violencia Hacia los Animales (formerly GEVHA) offered help

with its Program VioPet (*see below*) and initiated a cooperation with Social Services and local shelters to prevent future similar cases. The high-profile case generated significant [media interest](#).

ANIMAL ABUSE AND... CHILD MALTREATMENT

Connecticut Pioneers "CASA for Animals"

Taking a cue, perhaps, from practices involving Court-Appointed Special Advocates long-established in the child protection field, Connecticut has just enacted what may be the United States' first court provision that can best be described as "CASA for animals." **HB 5344** will allow Connecticut courts, effective Oct. 1, 2016, to appoint attorneys or law school students as advocates for any animals involved in prosecutions concerning custody of the animals or their welfare.



Rep. Diana Urban

The terms of what is now **Public Act No. 16-30** affect any prosecution or court proceedings under the general cruelty-to-animals statutes or in the Superior Court criminal session regarding the welfare or custody of a cat or dog. The court will be permitted, upon either its own initiative or upon request of a party or counsel, to order that a separate advocate be appointed to represent the interests of justice. The advocate may be an attorney or law school student with knowledge of animal issues and the legal systems. Such advocates will be selected from a list to be maintained by the Department of Agriculture.

These advocates will be able to: monitor the case; attend hearings; review appropriate records and consult with any individual who has pertinent information which might aid the judge; and present the court with relevant information relating to the interests of justice.

The measure was sponsored by State Rep. Diana Urban and the Joint Judiciary Committee. The National Link Coalition submitted a letter of support of the bill.

Rhode Island introduced similar legislation several years ago but tabled the measure indefinitely. Pending bills **AB 3443 in New York** and **SB 851 in Massachusetts** would authorize a guardian ad litem to be appointed by a court in tort causes of action for wrongful injury or death of a companion animal. **HB 147 in Alaska** would allow courts in divorce cases and domestic violence protection-from-abuse orders to consider the animals' best interests in awarding custody.

BUILDING AWARENESS ABOUT THE LINK

Veterinary Forensics Conference Considers The Link



The multidisciplinary nature of the Link was front-and-center at the International Veterinary Forensic Sciences Association's 9th Annual Veterinary Forensic Science Conference in St. Petersburg Beach, Fla. National Link Coalition Coordinator Phil Arkow presented a program on veterinary recognition



and reporting of suspected abuse. The ASPCA's Randy Lockwood (*right*) discussed psychological motivators for abuse, noting that while there is no single underlying motive for animal cruelty the various psychopathologies share the common denominators of a need for power and control and a response to a real or perceived sense of injustice. The National Sheriffs Association's John Thompson (*top left*) described how Link awareness is helping to change the culture of law enforcement officials who traditionally have not seen animal abuse as a serious issue. Lora Dunn of the Animal Legal Defense Fund (*left*) described how to resolve the conflicting goals of prosecutors, nonprofit animal welfare groups and the news media.

The conference, featuring 24 world-class speakers, attracted 95 participants from the U.S., Canada, the Netherlands, the U.K., Brazil, Taiwan, Malaysia, Australia and Portugal.

Link Cited as Rationale for Updates to India Anti-Cruelty Law



Kayva Chimalgi

Information published by the National Link Coalition was cited in a blog published in India encouraging animal welfare advocates in that country to push for improvements in India's Prevention of Cruelty Act. Writing in an opinion blog entitled [The Daily O](#), Kayva Chimalgi noted that the PCA Act, introduced in 1960, lists certain penalties for various offenses of cruelty to animals, including causing willful harm to an animal. That offense is punishable by a fine of 50 rupees (equivalent to US 75¢) and/or five years imprisonment. The Animal Welfare Board of India received 1,126 cases of animal cruelty across the country in 2014-2015, of which 794 resulted in convictions.

"One of the reasons we cannot afford to ignore animal abuse is the fact that there is strong proof of a link between animal cruelty and violence towards humans," she wrote. She cited [Barbara Boat's research](#) suggesting that exposure to animal abuse at a young age affects a child's brain development, resulting in long-term hyper-responsiveness to perceived threats which affect physical and psychological development.

Chimalgi also cited Allie Phillips' Link [Guidebook for Criminal Justice Professionals](#) which suggests that the presence of animal cruelty is an indicator of other forms of intra-familial abuse including child abuse, domestic violence and elder abuse.



Phoenix Symposium Addresses Domestic Violence/Animal Abuse Link

Nancy Bradley-Siemens, DVM, Clinical Assistant Professor in the Animal Health Institute at Midwestern University College of Veterinary Medicine, was a featured presenter at the Science Symposium on Domestic Violence hosted by the Sojourner Center in Phoenix, Ariz. Bradley-Siemens has extensive background in investigating animal crimes and in animal shelter medicine. [The Sojourner Center](#) is a pet-friendly facility in Phoenix providing emergency shelter, transitional housing, safety planning, case management, referral services and healthcare for some 8,700 women and children each year.

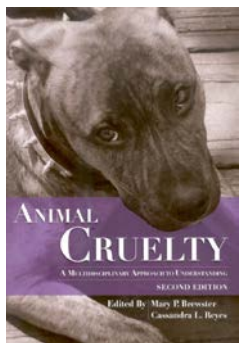
THE LINK IN THE LITERATURE

To Whom Should Veterinarians Report Animal Abuse?

Because they are often the first point of contact for sick or injured pets, veterinarians are key to recognizing animal abuse and neglect. In what may be the first review of states' mandatory and voluntary guidelines and administrative rules governing this ethical responsibility, researchers found a lack of standardization among and within states regarding reporting processes. They found disparities between what is stipulated by law and processes in place, which animals are covered, and how animal abuse is defined. They described variations in capabilities, funding and investigative powers among animal control, humane, and agriculture responding agencies. Such discrepancies inhibit the ease with which practitioners can determine where to report suspicions, likely leading to under-reporting. This also inhibits gauging the effectiveness of reporting laws. The authors encourage greater consistency among animal care and control agencies in order to be more effective in preventing future violence against animals and humans in our communities.

-- Glasere, M.E., & McCobb, E. (2016). How can veterinarians report animal abuse if they don't know who to report it to? *Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association*, 248(9), 992-993.

A Multidisciplinary Understanding of Animal Cruelty



The 2013 first edition of Mary Brewster and Cassandra Reyes' textbook, *Animal Cruelty: A Multidisciplinary Approach to Understanding*, quickly became an industry standard in human-animal studies and veterinary forensics courses addressing the recognition and response to animal abuse and human violence. This new 2nd edition updates all of the original material and adds two new chapters on veterinary forensic sciences and cruelty issues affecting free-roaming dogs. Chapters include: definitions; history of anti-cruelty laws; legal aspects; the animal-human bond; statistical measurement of animal cruelty; business and sport aspects of animal abuse; animal hoarding; animal cruelty and sexual deviance, family violence, fire-setting and homicide; the sociology and psychology of animal abuse; animal cruelty and reality TV; animal cruelty and delinquency, criminality and youth violence; and future directions in the field. An internationally-renowned cadre of 32 authors contributed to this 491-page textbook which promises to be even more widely utilized than the original.

-- Brewster, M.P. & Reyes, C.L. (Eds.). (2016). *Animal Cruelty: A Multidisciplinary Approach to Understanding*, 2nd ed. Durham, N. C.: Carolina Academic Press.

NEWS FROM LOCAL LINK COALITIONS

National Link Coalition Welcomes Australian Affiliate

The National Link Coalition is pleased to announce a new international affiliation in Australia, where the Eastern Metropolitan Region, Regional Family Violence Partnership (EMR RFVP) and its component Eastern Domestic Violence Service (EDVOS) are recognizing the significance of pet animals in violent relationships in Melbourne, Victoria.

Members of the two organizations have formally agreed to insert The Link into their existing curricula and to amend the EMR RFVP Mission Statement to include: "Build a system that provides safety and justice to all women, children and animals experiencing family violence in our region".



The EMR RFVP was established in 2007 as a partnership of organizations committed to working together to address family violence in Melbourne. The EMR RFVP is comprised of representatives from specialist family violence services, support agencies and government departments serving women, children and men in the region. Through the Partnership, service providers can work to continually refine an integrated family violence system.

The Partnership's key principles include: safety for women and children; women's rights to have choice, control and agency over their lives and future; accountability for perpetrators; recognizing cultural diversity; violence prevention; and coordinated responses to family violence and sexual assault. The EMR RFVP uses a human rights approach to build an equitable society that prevents violence against women and their children, their families and communities in all its forms.

EMR RFVP services hopes to put into action a plan for the safety of animals that eventually will spread to other networks in Victoria. This will lead to a united call across the state for more safe housing for pets.

EDVOS provides an integrated range of support services to empower women and children who have experienced domestic and family violence. It focuses on ensuring the safety of women and children and their pet animals and the accountability of perpetrators. Programs include support, advice, information, case management, safety planning, community education, and the "Pets in Peril" Program, a safe housing program established in 2006 in partnership with the Animal Aid animal shelter (See the September 2014 LINK-Letter).



Judy Johnson, who established EDVOS in 1994, formed a partnership with Monash University in 2001 to research the relationship between domestic violence and animal abuse and this was published in the Journal of Interpersonal Violence in 2008. The Victorian Law Reform Commission used the results of this study to include animal abuse in the Family Violence Protection Act 2008. The Act's definition of family violence includes "causing or threatening to cause the death of, or injury to, an animal, whether or not the animal belongs to the family member to whom the behaviour is directed so as to control, dominate or coerce the family member."

Johnson has written and presented papers on this topic at state and national conferences, various media articles and numerous radio interviews. She submitted a paper on the connections between domestic violence and animal abuse to the Royal Commission into Family Violence in 2015 describing gaps and deficiencies in current responses to family violence. She was awarded the Order of Australia Medal in

2007 “for service to the community through providing support and counseling services to women afflicted by domestic violence.”

She is currently working with veterinarians at the Melbourne University School of Veterinary Science to include cross-training for their students on domestic violence and how to respond to a woman if abuse of an animal is suspected. Johnson will be the contact in Melbourne for the National Link Coalition.

“The Royal Commission into Family Violence has shone a powerful light on family violence in Victoria,” Johnson tells The LINK-Letter. “However, much remains to be done in developing a community awareness of the lesser-known animal abuse link, and in finding practical solutions for all who have been affected by family violence.”

Spain Link Group Presents at Conferences, Launches VioPet Campaign

Dr. Núria Querol of our Link affiliate in Spain, Observatorio de Violencia Hacia los Animales (formerly GEVHA), was invited to open the AMVAC Congress on Animal Protection organized by FAPAM and the Association of Companion Animal Veterinarians of Madrid. This year’s Congress was



Observatorio de Violencia
Hacia los Animales



focused on law enforcement’s key role in fighting animal abuse and interpersonal violence. She spoke about the scientific background of The Link, the work of the National Link Coalition, the National Coalition on Violence Against Animals, the National Law Enforcement Center on Animal Abuse, the FBI’s inclusion of animal cruelty data in national crime reporting systems, and Animal CSI. She also addressed this topic at the Spanish Society of Criminology’s 1st Congress on Animal Protection. Other speakers addressed the role of

veterinarians in animal abuse and interpersonal violence.

The Observatorio has also started a new campaign called VioPet with the theme, “No victim should choose between her safety or her animal’s”. The group has appealed to the Ministry of Health and Social Services and the Ministry of the Interior to ask for VioPet to be implemented nationally.



“Big D” Starting a Link Coalition



A Link coalition is being organized in the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex region of Texas. At left, participants gathered for the inaugural meeting on May 20 at the SPCA of Texas. Organizations including Adult Protective Services, Family Place, the Dallas County Prosecutor’s Office, SPCA, Texas Humane Legislation Network, Probate Court Guardianship, and others have expressed an initial interest in participating, [Linda Ross](#) is coordinating the effort.

THE LINK... IN THE LEGISLATURES

Link Cited as Rationale for California Humane Education Measure

Citing academic studies that have established a correlation between animal cruelty during childhood and interpersonal violence in adulthood, and law enforcement agencies in major cities acknowledging this correlation and forming special enforcement units to combat animal cruelty, the California General Assembly on May 2 adopted **H.R. 28**. The measure resolves that compliance with Education Code provisions should include educating students on the principles of kindness and respect for animals and observance of laws, regulations, and policies pertaining to the humane treatment of animals. It also encourages the Superintendent of Public Instruction to ensure the incorporation of humane education in California's core curriculum.



H.R. 28, introduced by Reps. Matthew Dababneh and Ian Calderon, also cites humane education's potential to instill empathy in children and "disrupt the cycle of animal and human abuse by decreasing a child's potential to be abusive or neglectful toward animals and, consequently, to promote prosocial behavior toward humans."



Matthew Dababneh

Sec. 233.5 of California's Hate Violence Prevention Act and Sec.

Ian Calderon

60042 of the state's Education Code mandate instruction in K-12 to promote and encourage kindness to pets and humane treatment of animals, but enforcement of these provisions has been inconsistent (*See the [September 2015 LINK-Letter](#)*).

Bills We're Watching... and Laws We're Celebrating:

Domestic Violence/Pet Protection Orders



H.R. 1258 – the Pet And Women Safety (PAWS) Act – was re-introduced with a new number and 190 bi-partisan co-sponsors. The bill would expand existing federal domestic violence protections to include pets of domestic violence victims. It would prohibit crossing state lines to harm a domestic partner's pet, and establish a federal grant program to provide assistance and housing to victims' pets in need of emergency shelter. The bill has been assigned to the Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, Homeland Security and Investigations. A companion measure in the Senate – **S. 1559** – with 26 co-sponsors has been referred to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry.



Alaska HB 147 would allow victims to petition the court for a protective order that the abuser may not remove, harm or dispose of any animals in the household, and to grant her exclusive care and custody of them. Peace officers investigating domestic violence cases must inform victims of this provision. The bill would also declare pets to be marital property and give courts authority to decide individual or joint custody when people divorce, with consideration of what would be best for the animal. It would also define an act of animal abuse in this context as domestic violence. The measure has cleared both houses and is awaiting transmittal to the Governor's office.



Indiana SB 343 would have allowed courts to grant a protection orders to: (1) grant possession and care of an animal to a petitioner; (2) prohibit a respondent from taking action against the animal; and (3) direct a law enforcement officer to accompany the petitioner to retrieve the animal. The bill was in the Judiciary Committee when the General Assembly adjourned.



Michigan SB 28 would make it a crime to knowingly kill, torture, mutilate, maim, disfigure, or poison an animal, or threaten to do so, with the intent of causing mental suffering or distress to a person or to exert control over a person. The bill passed the Judiciary Committee and is in the Committee of the Whole.



Michigan HB 4478 allows courts to issue protection-from-abuse orders preventing respondents from injuring, torturing, neglecting, threatening, or removing the petitioner’s animals. It applies to current or former spouses; individuals with whom the petitioner has a child in common or where there has been a dating relationship; or an individual presently or formerly residing in the same household. The bill was signed by Gov. Rick Snyder on May 3.



New Mexico S 55 would have appropriated \$500,000 to the Children, Youth & Families Department to enhance the system of providing temporary care and housing for animals belonging to victims of family violence. In 2015 the Legislature enacted a statute appropriating \$300,000, to be paid in six annual installments of \$50,000 each. The bill was approved by the Public Affairs Committee and was been sent to the Finance Committee, where it was postponed indefinitely.



Pennsylvania SB 594 would increase penalties for killing, torturing, maiming or poisoning an animal belonging to someone who is protected by a protection-from-abuse order to a \$2,000 - \$15,000 fine and/or two years’ imprisonment. The bill was approved by the Senate and is in the House Judiciary Committee.



Wisconsin SB 97 was signed into law on March 1 by Gov. Scott Walker. Judges or circuit court commissioners issuing temporary restraining orders or injunctions not only in domestic violence cases but also in child abuse, individual-at-risk and harassment situations may order the respondent not to remove, hide, damage, harm, mistreat, or dispose of a household pet. Petitioners or family members acting on their behalf may retrieve a household pet.

Animal Abuse in the Presence of a Child



Idaho HB399 would make the torture of a companion animal in the presence of a minor a felony. The bill is in the House Ways & Means Committee.



Massachusetts H3446 would criminalize animal abuse in the presence of a child under age 14 and would increase penalties for such cruelty to up to 10 years in prison and/or a \$10,000 fine. The bill is in the Judiciary Committee.



New York A534 defines “aggravated” animal cruelty as causing extreme physical pain or done in an especially depraved or sadistic manner, a Class E felony. It would make the commission of aggravated cruelty in the presence of a child a Class D felony. The bill is in the Codes Committee.



New York A944 and **S1795** would criminalize knowingly causing a minor to attend a place where exhibition of animal fighting is being conducted. **A944** is in the Codes Committee. **S1795** passed the Senate, died in the Assembly, and was referred back to the Senate Agriculture Committee for a third reading.

Animal Hoarding



New York A1265 would create the crime of companion animal hoarding. The bill is in the Assembly Agriculture Committee.

Animal Abuse and Other Crimes



California HR28 encourages the Superintendent of Public Instruction to ensure the incorporation of humane education in the core curriculum in order to disrupt the cycle of human and animal abuse by decreasing a child's potential to be abusive or neglectful. The measure resolves that compliance with Education Code provisions should include educating students on the principles of kindness and respect for animals and observance of laws, regulations, and policies pertaining to the humane treatment of animals. The Resolution was adopted by the Assembly on May 2.



California SB 1200 would initially would have required the standards for the selection and training of law enforcement and probation officers to include a requirement for training on domestic violence and the nexus between animal cruelty and violence against persons, has been amended. The amended bill only requires law enforcement agencies to include arrests for animal cruelty in their annual reports to the Governor. The amended bill was approved 39-0 by the Senate on June 2 and was sent to the Assembly.



Florida S314 and **HB129** would have amended juvenile justice provisions to allow prosecutors to charge juveniles between the ages of 16 and 18 as adults for committing any of 17 crimes including aggravated animal cruelty by intentional acts. Prosecutors would have been required to gather considerable data regarding the children, including any histories of abuse or neglect. **S314** passed the Senate by a vote of 40-0 but died in the House. **HB 129** died in the House Justice Appropriations Committee.



Michigan HB 4353 would allow animal shelters to consider an individual's criminal history when determining whether or not to allow that individual to adopt an animal. Convicted animal abusers could not adopt for at least 5 years following conviction. The bill is passed the Judiciary Committee and is in the Committee of the Whole. **Senate Bill 219** would prohibit offenders convicted of animal fighting or bestiality from owning animals other than livestock for 5 years. The bill cleared the Senate by a 37-1 vote on Jan. 28 and is now in the House Judiciary Committee.



New York A346 and **S6919** would create a statewide task force to study how to improve investigations of animal abuse and enforcement of anti-cruelty laws. The bills are in the Agriculture Committees.



New York A1596 and **S2936** would expand the definition of aggravated cruelty to animals to include harm to animals during the commission of a felony. **A1596** is being held for consideration in the Codes Committee. **S2936** passed the Senate on March 7 and was sent to the Assembly Agriculture Committee.



The **Oregon** Veterinary Medical Examination Board has proposed Rule No. [875-030-1101](#) which would provide for a screening of applicants and licensees to determine if they have a history of criminal behavior that would preclude their fitness to practice as a veterinarian or certified veterinary technician.

“CASA for Animals”



Connecticut HB 5344 will allow courts, effective Oct. 1, 2016, to appoint attorneys or law school students as advocates for any animals involved in prosecutions concerning custody of the animals or their welfare.



Massachusetts SB 851 would authorize actions to recover non-economic damages for the injury or death of companion animals and authorize a guardian ad litem to recover damages. The Joint Committee on the Judiciary approved the bill on April 4 and referred it to the Joint Rules Committee for further study.



New York A3443 would authorize a guardian ad litem to be appointed by a court in tort causes of action for wrongful injury or death of a companion animal. It would also allow restraining orders and other injunctive relief for the wrongful injury or killing of a companion animal. The bill has been referred to the Rules Committee.

Animal Sexual Abuse



Michigan SB 219, which amends several sections of the state penal code regarding animal cruelty crimes, adds a provision that anyone convicted of animal sexual abuse (called “the abominable and detestable crime against nature” in the bill) is not only guilty of a felony but shall be prohibited from owning or possessing an animal for five years. The prohibition appears to also apply to persons convicted of anal sex with a human being. The bill cleared the Senate by a 37-1 vote on Jan. 28 and is now in the House Judiciary Committee.



New Hampshire HB 1547 would establish the crime of bestiality as a Class A misdemeanor for a first offense and a Class B felony for subsequent offenses. Convicted offenders would be required to submit to psychological assessment and counseling at their own expense, and could be barred from residing with any animals for a time period deemed appropriate by the court. The bill has passed the House and Senate and is awaiting the Governor’s signature.



Ohio SB 195 would prohibit a person from engaging in sexual conduct with an animal, and related acts. It would provide for the seizure of the animals involved and authorize the sentencing court to require offenders to undergo psychological evaluation or counseling. The bill is in the Criminal Justice Committee.





Oklahoma HB2398, the “Justice for J.W. Act,” would increase the maximum sentence for a person who forces another person to engage in “the detestable and abominable crime against nature” committed “with mankind or with a beast” from the current 10 years to 20 years. The bill passed the House and the Senate and was signed into law on May 6 by Gov. Mary Fallin.




Canada C-246 would amend the Criminal Code to not require penetration in the definition of bestiality. It would also address offenses regarding gross negligence, animal fighting, and brutal and vicious killing of animals, and institute a lifetime ban on animal ownership upon a second conviction for animal cruelty.

Interventions for Animal Abuse Offenders


 **New York A1445** and **S1174** would increase penalties for animal fighting and aggravated cruelty to animals and would require a psychiatric evaluation for defendants convicted of aggravated cruelty. The bills are being held for consideration in the Agriculture Committees.


 **New York A1673** and **S814** would require unsealing of court records that juvenile offenders convicted of animal cruelty offenses and require them to undergo psychiatric evaluation and treatment where necessary. The bills are being held for consideration in the Agriculture Committees.


Animal-Assisted Therapeutic Interventions for Abuse Victims


 **Connecticut Raised Bill No. 5140** would allow volunteer teams of therapy animals and their registered handlers, with whom a child victim of assault, sexual assault or child abuse feels comfortable, to be present during courtroom testimony. The bill was approved by the Joint Committee on Children and the House Committee on Judiciary but was tabled on April 6 by the House.


Cross Reporting

 **Georgia HB 892** would clarify that a veterinarian can report suspect animal cruelty without violating confidentiality requirements. The bill was in the Agriculture and Consumer Affairs Committee when the Legislature adjourned.

 **Kansas – HB 2451** would have added animal control officers to the list of other professionals who are mandated reporters of child abuse, with immunity from civil liability for good-faith reporting. The bill was in the House Committee on Corrections and Juvenile Justice when the legislature adjourned.

 **Kentucky HB 269** would have amended the veterinarian-client-patient relationship provisions to allow veterinarians to provide information without the owner's consent to public health, animal welfare, wildlife, or agriculture authorities employed by federal, state or local government agencies who have a legal or regulatory interest in the protection of animal or public health, with immunity from liability. The measure passed the House Agriculture & Small Business Committee and the Rules Committee and was approved by the House 67-30. The bill was in the Senate Agriculture Committee when the legislative session ended.

 **Maryland SB 722** and **HB 1586** would have required a veterinarian who has reason to believe that an animal has been subjected to abuse or neglect to make a specified report. **SB 722** received an unfavorable report from the Senate Judicial proceedings Committee. **HB 1586** was in the House Rules and Executive Nominations Committee when the legislature adjourned.

 **Massachusetts S863** and **H132** would add domestic violence workers, animal control officers and humane officers to the list of mandated reporters of child abuse. **S863** was approved on April 4 by the Joint Judiciary Committee and was referred to the Joint Rules Committee for further study. **H132** was approved by the Committee on Children, Families and Persons with Disabilities and by the House Steering, Policy and Scheduling Committee and was ordered on June 2 to a third reading.



New York A5082 would require anyone mandated to report suspected child abuse who also encounters suspected animal abuse in the course of their duties to make an immediate report to local police or SPCA agencies. Failure to report would be a Class A misdemeanor and civilly liable. An extensive list of medical, social work, therapy, education, camp, day care, counseling and law enforcement professionals are mandated reporters of child abuse. The bill is in the Social Services Committee.



New York's S6659 and A9346 would change language regarding reporting of suspected animal abuse from "the veterinarian may report" to the appropriate law-enforcement agency to "shall report." The bills are in the Higher Education Committee.



Pennsylvania HB 760 would protect veterinarians, certified veterinary technicians and assistants from civil liability if they report suspected cases of animal abuse in good faith to law enforcement authorities. The bill passed the House on Sept. 29 and is currently in the Senate Judiciary Committee.



Virginia HB802 expands the definition of those who are granted immunity from civil or criminal liability or administrative sanction for reporting, in good faith, suspected animal cruelty from "veterinarian" to "any person regulated by the Board of Veterinary Medicine," thereby including veterinary technicians. The bill passed the House and Senate and **was signed into law on March 1.**



Wisconsin SB 727 would have expanded the reporting requirement to apply to a violation of any animal cruelty law; a veterinarian making a report of animal mistreatment in good faith would be immune from civil liability. (Current Wisconsin law requires a veterinarian to report to a humane officer or law enforcement officer only when the veterinarian has reason to believe that an animal has been in a fight in violation of the law relating to animal fighting.) The bill was in the Committee on the Judiciary and Public Safety when the legislative session ended.

Permission to Reprint

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

THE LINK... IN THE NEWS

Judge Throws Book at Ex-Con Who Threw Puppy Out of Window



Protesters gathered at the court hearing

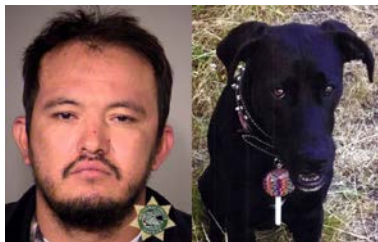
An ex-convict who previously served 15 months in prison on domestic violence and child endangerment charges pleaded guilty to first-degree misdemeanor charges of cruelty to a companion animal for throwing a dog out of a sixth-floor apartment window because it urinated on his mother's bed. Michael Andrew Sutton, 23, told Painesville, Ohio police that he then retrieved the body of the dog, a three-month-old boxer/lab/lab mix named "Nox," wrapped it up and took it to a trash chute, where it was later found in a trash compactor. The [News-Herald](#) reported that Sutton said, "I know my actions were sick. Six years I've been saying I need help with a lot of things in my head. Prison, jail putting me in a hostile environment isn't going to help. But for my actions, I understand there's consequences, and serious consequences, and I'm willing to take action on any consequence there is for this."

Municipal Court Judge Michael A. Cicconetti sentenced Sutton on May 16 to the maximum 6 months in jail plus five years probation, forbade him from having another pet, and ordered him to take his medications for his bipolar and schizophrenia conditions even though Sutton has a history of not staying on his meds. The judge, who said he fully expects Sutton to commit further crimes in the future, had harsh words for the defendant and wished he could have sentenced him to more time behind bars.

"I am sick and tired of people blaming this on mental illness," Cicconetti said. "I'd like to give you one of those creative sentences. But that's for first-time offenders. You were just brutal and savage. Would I like to put you in the Dumpster? Yeah, I'd love to do that! But the only thing I can do is max you."

"When you broke your mother's ribs, were you on medication then? How about when [you assaulted] the mother of your child while she was holding your baby? Were you on medication then? We the taxpayers paid you \$700 a month because you were on disability," the judge said. "That's not mental illness! You are revolting, and you are inhuman."

Car Theft Leads to Animal Abuse and Identity Theft Charges



Francisco Gonzalez and "Kona"

Francisco Vincent Gonzalez, 34, of Portland, Ore., has been arraigned on 11 counts of animal abuse, abandonment, neglect, car theft, identity theft, and drug charges, for allegedly abandoning a stolen car with the owner's dog trapped inside. [KOIN-TV](#) reported that the dog, a black Lab/great Dane named "Kona," died from the April 7 incident. Portland police responded to a marijuana dispensary where a man reported that his car had been stolen with Kona inside. On April 12, officers responding to a report of a suspicious vehicle found the car with Kona, deceased from exposure to hot weather. Gonzalez was arrested on April 14 at a motel room which his wife had rented to harbor him; she was charged with hindering prosecution. Gonzalez also allegedly used the car owner's identification illegally resulting in the charge of identity theft. He was being held in the Multnomah County Detention Center under \$135,000 bail.



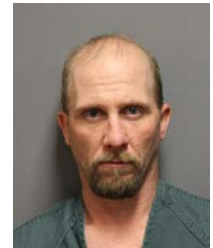
Anita Parker

Woman Charged with Killing Dog to Fake Miscarriage

Prosecutors in Lawrence County, Ala. charged Anita Parker, 43, with felony animal cruelty, alleging she faked a pregnancy for seven months and then killed her pet Chihuahua to fake a miscarriage. [WAFF-TV](#) reported that paramedics responding to a 911 call about a pregnancy-related emergency found Parker covered in blood and took her to a hospital, where doctors found she had never been pregnant. Her boyfriend later found the mutilated body of the dog in the garbage can. Investigators alleged she killed the dog for its blood and tissue to help stage the fake miscarriage.

Man Charged with Shooting His Wife’s Dogs and Burning Their Bodies

Police in Fairmount Township, Penna. arrested Steven Saxe, 37, on felony and misdemeanor animal cruelty, assault and weapons charges, alleging that he shot his wife’s two dogs and then attempted to burn their bodies. The incident occurred only several weeks after he was also charged with allegedly pointing a 9-mm handgun at his wife and several others after an argument. The [Wilkes-Barre Times-Leader](#) reported that Saxe admitted to police that he shot “Lucky” and “Elmo” inside his residence and took the bodies out to a burn pit on the property. A necropsy performed by a veterinarian found that Lucky, a hound mix, had been shot in the right shoulder. Elmo, a Shih Tzu, was too severely burned to be examined.



Steven Saxe

Man Indicted on Animal Cruelty, Arson, Burglary Charges in Domestic Dispute

A Rockingham County, N.H. grand jury indicted Gregory Bruno, 27, on 13 felony and four misdemeanor charges in connection with a string of several fires that left four dogs dead and for allegedly feeding a dog a knife blade. The [Manchester Union-Leader](#) reported that Bruno was charged with arson, burglary, animal cruelty, witness tampering, insurance fraud, and other offenses. According to the indictments, the series of fires began in a burglary during which three dogs died of smoke inhalation. Rockingham County Attorney Patricia Conway said Bruno had shown a pattern of terrorizing a victim in the fire and that the two were involved in a domestic violence relationship. Bruno is also accused of setting fires that destroyed self-storage rental units, a second home, and a car; a dog inside that vehicle also died.

LINK TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

June 15 – West Chester, Penna.: Phil Arkow will present on The Link at a class on the Human-Animal Dynamic in the [West Chester University Graduate School of Social Work](#).

June 15-17 – Barcelona, Spain: Dr. Núria Querol will speak about Observatorio de Violencia Hacia los Animales at [XI Congreso Español de Criminología](#).

June 19 – Arlington, Va.: John Thompson will participate in a panel discussion on “Law Enforcement and Litigation” at the [Taking Action for Animals](#) conference.

June 20 – Hartford, Conn.: Phil Arkow will conduct a multi-disciplinary training for the [Connecticut Department of Children & Families](#)’ child abuse and domestic violence divisions, and animal control officers.

June 25 – San Francisco, Calif.: Jennifer Woolf, DVM will present on “The Veterinarian’s Role in Animal Abuse Cases” at the [Pacific Veterinary Conference](#).

June 29 – Minneapolis, Minn.: Mark Kumpf will discuss how NIBRS will track animal cruelty crimes, and Howard Lawrence will discuss the ASPCA’s experience in turning animal cruelty cases over to the NYPD, at the [National Sheriffs’ Association](#)’s Annual Conference.

June 29 – West Palm Beach, Fla.: [The South Florida Link Coalition](#) will hold its regular meeting at the Emergency Operation Center.

July 7 (online): Allie Phillips will lead a webinar on “The Danger When Animal Abuse Occurs with Family Violence: Strategies and Policies for Keeping Families Safe” for the [Battered Women’s Justice Project](#).

July 8 – Barcelona, Spain: M. Patterson will present on “Animal Hoarding: When the Love of Animals Goes Wrong” at the [International Society for Anthrozoology](#) conference.

July 11-12 – Paris, France: Phil Arkow will participate in a global exchange examining research and practice aspects of animal abuse and domestic violence at the [International Association of Human-Animal Interaction Organizations](#)’ Triennial conference.

July 18 – Boston, Mass.: Allie Phillips and several therapy animal handler teams will present a one-day track at the [National District Attorneys Association](#)’s National Victims’ Rights Summit.

July 29 – Guntersville, Ala.: Nelson Ferry will describe the FBI’s new procedures for data collection of animal cruelty cases at the [Southeastern Animal Control Association](#)’s annual training conference.

Aug. 3 – Baton Rouge, La.: Phil Arkow will present on “The Violence Connection: A Community Approach to Breaking the Cycles of Violence” at the [Louisiana Animal Control Association](#) conference.

Aug. 11 – (online): Phil Arkow will conduct a webinar with representatives from two pet-friendly domestic violence shelters entitled “What About Me? Animal Abuse, Domestic Violence and Sheltering On-site” for the [Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence](#).

Sept. 13 – (Online): Allie Phillips will present on her program Sheltering Animals & Families Together (SAF-T) on a webinar for the [Virginia Sexual & Domestic Violence Action Alliance](#).

Sept. 15 – Mashantucket, Conn.: Phil Arkow will train on the domestic violence/animal abuse Link at the [Connecticut State Animal Control Officers](#)’ conference.

Sept. 25 – Louisville, Ky.: Jennifer Woolf, DVM will speak on “Everything You Never Wanted to Know About Animal Cruelty (But You Know You Should Ask)” at the 105th Annual [Kentucky Veterinary Medical Association](#) Meeting and 43rd Mid-America Veterinary Conference.

Sept. 27 – Winnipeg, Man., Canada: Phil Arkow will speak on Animal and Family Abuse at the inaugural international [One Welfare Conference](#).

Sept. 28 – Norman, Okla.: Phil Arkow will present on The Link at the [Oklahoma Attorney General's](#) annual Domestic, Sexual Violence and Stalking Partnership conference.

Sept. 29 – Black Hawk, Colo.: Phil Arkow will present on how The Link can shift the paradigm of animal shelters at the [Colorado Animal Welfare Conference](#).

Sept. 30 – West Lafayette, Ind.: Lila Miller will present on the veterinarian's role in recognizing, documenting and handling animal abuse cases at Purdue University's [2016 Veterinary Conference](#).

Oct. 6 – Seattle, Wash.: Phil Arkow will deliver the keynote presentation on "Advancing Animal Care and Control via Species-Spanning Services and Systems" at the [National Animal Care & Control Association Training Conference 2016](#). Other conference presentations will include Belinda Lewis speaking on "Crime Scene Processing," and a discussion of animal control officer' role in the FBI's NIBRS reporting system by Mary Lou Randour, Dan DeSousa and Martha Smith-Blackmore.

Oct. 17-21 – Keene, Plymouth, Rochester, Manchester, & Concord, N.H.: Phil Arkow will present Link training to the New Hampshire Division of Children, Youth & Families, and other government, domestic violence and animal care and control [agencies](#).

Oct. 23-26 – Denver, Colo.: Diane Balkin, Jim Pyle and Phil Tedeschi will present on The Link at the [Animal Grantmakers](#) Conference.

Nov. 3 – (various locations): The One Health Commission, One Health Initiative, and One Health Platform will sponsor the 1st Annual [One Health Day](#), a worldwide series of events highlighting transdisciplinary, collaborative approaches to overarching community health and welfare issues.

Nov. 4 -- Phoenix, Md.: Nancy Blaney will present at the Baltimore County State's Attorney's Office Animal Abuse Unit [Animal Abuse Leadership Summit](#).

Nov. 5-6 – Sydney, Australia: [Lucy's Project](#) will hold its 2nd annual conference on Perspectives of Domestic Violence and Animal Abuse. Speakers will include Lydia Tong, Catherine Tiplady, representatives from RSPCA offices, academia, and domestic violence programs.

Nov. 9 – Stamford, Conn.: Phil Arkow will train on the Link between domestic violence and animal abuse during Grand Rounds at [Stamford Hospital](#).

Dec. 1 – Ontario, Calif.: Phil Arkow will present on "Overcoming Challenges at the Intersections of Animal Abuse and Other Family Violence" at the San Bernardino County District Attorney's annual [Animal Cruelty Task Force](#) training.

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



ABOUT THE NATIONAL LINK COALITION



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

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

Lesley Ashworth

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