



# NATIONAL LINK COALITION

*Working together to stop violence against people and animals*

The LINK-Letter **Vol. 9, No. 10** **October 2016**

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



ON THE LINK BETWEEN ANIMAL ABUSE AND HUMAN VIOLENCE



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

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## OCTOBER IS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH

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

#### **Domestic Violence Shelter Renovation Accommodates Dogs and Cats**



[The Center for Women and Families](#) in Louisville, Ky., is the latest domestic violence shelter to open pet kennels as a means to keep the entire family of domestic violence survivors together. At a dedication ceremony on Oct. 4, timed to coincide with Domestic Violence Awareness Month, community leaders cut a purple ribbon to officially open the Sam Swope Family Foundation Safe Haven Pet Center.

Speaking at a press conference officially announcing the new facility, Louisville Metro Police Department Chief Steve Conrad cited statistics of how many battered

women delay leaving out of fear for their pets' welfare. "This isn't an imaginary deal," he told [WLKY-TV](#). "It happens all the time."

Conrad also referenced a 2011 murder of 14-year-old Trey Zwicker; before his stepfather murdered him he had killed the family's dog and injured the family's cat. "I have to believe that hearing these kinds of threats, and seeing them acted upon, kept this family from reaching out for help when they clearly needed it most.

The organization has had a long-standing relationship with the Kentucky Humane Society. Pets coming into the domestic violence shelter can now be held for 48 hours, at which point the humane society steps in and finds a foster home for up to 90 days. Meanwhile, Metro Animal Services director Ozzy Gibson announced his department is training its animal control officers to recognize signs of domestic violence.



## Community Rallies to Aid of Homeless Domestic Violence Survivor and Her Dog

After experiencing several years of emotional and physical abuse at the hands of her now ex-boyfriend, Diann Wears, 51, of Toledo, Ohio secretly made plans to leave last July. With no family or friends to turn to, her only resource was “Cow,” her 6-year-old boxer mix who is, she told the [Toledo Blade](#) as part of a dramatic two-part series, “my whole world, my rock.” Cow helps her cope with diagnosed depression, anxiety, panic attacks, and post-traumatic stress disorder.



But Cow soon became an unexpected liability, forcing her to choose between “woof or roof.” The domestic violence shelter in Toledo would not admit Cow. Libraries, homeless shelters, soup kitchens and employment services are similarly off-limits. Finding an apartment that would accept Cow was impossible. And so for several months Wears and Cow lived on the streets, sleeping under the overhang in front of a former Greyhound bus station and joining the ranks of Toledo’s homeless.

“It’s totally new to me and totally scary, I’m not gonna lie,” she told the newspaper. “But Cow and I, we have each other, and she gives me a lot of love and support.”

Cow also offers physical safety and deters potential predators. “She’s a pretty good judge of character,” Diann said of Cow. “If she doesn’t like you, there’s a reason.”

That was the situation for more than two months until the *Blade*’s feature galvanized [community support](#). In three days, an online fundraising campaign raised more than \$6,000. Multiple people offered housing. On Sept. 23 Wears and Cow moved into a small, one-bedroom apartment to begin their new lives. Others donated free veterinary services, pet food and personal items.

Wears is reportedly now trying to pay it forward by directing some donations to nonprofits that assist homeless individuals. She also hopes to one day become an advocate for women who have endured human trafficking, domestic violence, and other abuse like she has.

## Massachusetts Appeals Court Upholds Pet Protective Order

A Massachusetts Appeals Court has upheld a lower court’s issuance of a pet protection order. Zachary James Orme had appealed a District Court judge’s decision to issue a protection-from-abuse order on behalf of Renee Portanova and her dog. Orme tried to claim that Portanova had failed to prove that she feared imminent serious physical harm to herself or to her dog, and that the protection order statute had been applied improperly. In its [Sept. 27, 2016 ruling](#) No. 15-P-1283, the Appeals Court disagreed, stating that there was ample evidence to support the issuance of the abuse prevention order, and that the court did not err in extending the no-contact order to include the dog.

## THE LINK IN THE LITERATURE

### Pet Ownership Called a Protective Factor for Victimized Homeless Adolescents

Acknowledging that many homeless adolescents come from troubled backgrounds of parental substance abuse and childhood physical and sexual assault, that the mental health of homeless youths is poor, and that the risks of suicide and of victimization are increased, Canadian researchers sought to examine how the presence of pets among homeless youths might serve as a protective factor against depression.

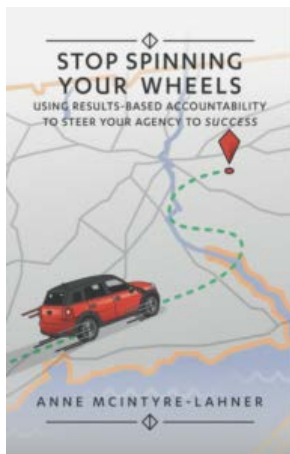
They interviewed 189 street-involved youths in Ontario and reported that the rate of depression was three times greater for youths who did not own pets. The authors noted that while pet ownership among this vulnerable population has many liabilities – including impairing their ability to access shelter, services, housing and employment opportunities – pets offer physical and psychosocial benefits that homeless youths might otherwise have difficulty attaining.



-- Lem, M., Coe, J.B., Haley, D.B., Stone, E., & O'Grady, W. (2016). The protective association between pet ownership and depression among street-involved youth: A cross-sectional study. *Anthrozoös*, 29(1), 123-136.

## ANIMAL ABUSE AND... CHILD MALTREATMENT

### Book to Help Children's Organizations become More Effective



Anne McIntyre-Lahner, Director of Performance Management for the Connecticut Department of Children and Families and who has helped implement the pioneering cross-reporting program between child protection workers and animal control officers, has had a book published that will help guide social service agency executives to better reach their personal and organizational potential. *Stop Spinning Your Wheels: Using Results-Based Accountability to Steer Your Agency to Success* is filled with practical advice and recommendations. The book chronicles the implementation of Results-Based Accountability in Connecticut's DCF and shares how the department changed its focus from "processes" to "outcomes" to achieve real, measurable change.

McIntyre-Lahner demonstrates how Results-Based Accountability was used to create the Connecticut Kids Report Card – a policy tool that helps legislators, service providers, and the public track the state of Connecticut's children and inform budget, management, and planning decisions. It also tells the continuing story of how leadership in DCF is infusing performance accountability into the culture of the organization.

The book is published by [Clear Impact](#). Profits from book sales will be donated to nonprofit agencies serving children and families.

## Child Abuse and Witnessing Animal Cruelty Affect Age of Onset of Committing Childhood Animal Abuse

Extensive research documents that children who commit or witness animal cruelty are at increased risk for perpetrating additional acts of animal abuse in adolescence and adulthood. What has not been studied in detail has been the degree to which the age of the child impacts these future actions.



**John Browne, Christopher Hensley and Karen McGuffee**

A forthcoming study by John Browne, Christopher Hensley and Karen McGuffee is shedding additional light on this subject. Using data collected from 257 male inmates at a Southern medium-security prison, the goal of the study was to examine the association between demographic characteristics and childhood experiences on the age when they committed childhood animal cruelty and its recurrency.

Results revealed that those who were physically abused as children were more likely to engage in recurrent animal cruelty. The younger the age of the child when he first witnessed cruelty, the sooner was his initiation to hurting and killing animals. In addition, those who witnessed a parent commit acts of animal abuse reported that they committed animal abuse themselves at an older age. Those who witnessed a brother or sister commit animal abuse reported engaging in animal cruelty at an earlier age.

The authors, based in the Criminal Justice Department at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, concluded that physical abuse and witnessing primary socializers engage in animal abuse seem to be important factors in understanding the age of onset and incidence of repeated childhood animal cruelty. The current study replicated a 2012 study by Hensley, Tallichet, and Dutkiewicz on the predictive value of childhood animal cruelty on adult violence.

-- Browne, J.A., Hensley, C., & McGuffee, K.M. (2016). Does witnessing animal cruelty and being abused during childhood predict the initial age and recurrence of committing childhood animal cruelty? In press: *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*. DOI: 10.1177/0306624X16644806

## Public Service Announcement Seeks to Deter Youth Cruelty to Animals

Reacting to a high incidence of animal abuse committed by youths in Baltimore, a community group has created a multi-media campaign featuring role model athletes, wounded veterans, and other “tough guys” to show abusive youths that it’s cool to be kind. A new 2:20 [Public Service Announcement](#) for the Show Your Soft Side campaign pointedly notes that “only a punk” would hurt a cat or dog.



“My animals were the best part of childhood, so I couldn’t imagine why kids would do this,” says Sande Riesett, who co-founded the pro bono, all-volunteer [Show Your Soft Side](#) campaign in 2011. “It’s not just about laws and holding abusers accountable: It’s about changing young minds.”

“Very tough men are showing that only cowards hurt animals. True men protect animals,” says LINK advocate Caroline A. Griffin in the video, which is available on YouTube.

## HOW TO REPORT SUSPECTED ANIMAL ABUSE

Child protection professionals who encounter suspected animal abuse often do not know how to report their suspicions to the appropriate agency. The Connecticut Department of Agriculture, which supervises the state's municipal animal control officers, created this form for Department of Children and Families caseworkers to use to submit a report.

It could easily be modified for other agencies – such as adult protective services, domestic violence, veterinary, and other disciplines. We present it here as a model for you to use.

Remember: just as with reporting child or elder abuse, a reporter does not have to prove it: he or she merely needs to suspect it, and report it to the appropriate agency which will then investigate the situation further.

STATE OF CONNECTICUT					
Dept. of Agriculture File # _____					
SUSPECTED ANIMAL ABUSE REPORT					
MUST BE SUBMITTED TO THE COMMISSIONER OF AGRICULTURE NO LATER THAN 48 HOURS					
DATE AND TIME SUSPECTED NEGLECT OR CRUELTY OCCURRED				NAME AND TOWN OF REPORTING OFFICER	
NAME OF ANIMAL OWNER				ADDRESS AND TOWN OF ANIMAL OWNER	
TELEPHONE # OF ANIMAL OWNER				ADDRESS AND TOWN WHERE ANIMAL IS LOCATED	
SPECIES OF ANIMAL	BREED	AGE	SEX	COLOR(S)	NAME OF ANIMAL
NATURE OF HARM, NEGLECT OR CRUELTY: _____					
HOW DID YOU LEARN OF THE SUSPECTED HARM, NEGLECT OR CRUELTY? _____					
NAME OF ALL SUSPECTS:				COMPLETE ADDRESS OF SUSPECTS:	
PREVIOUS HISTORY: _____					
CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE 165 CAPITOL AVENUE ROOM G-8A HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106				TELEPHONE: (860) 713-2505 FAX: (860) 713-2515	
Rev: 9/15				White Original: Dept. of Agriculture      Yellow Copy: Officer's File	



## *THE LINK AND THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM*

### **“CASA for Animals” Law Takes Effect**

Connecticut’s pioneering “Desmond’s Law,” modeled after long-established Court-Appointed Special Advocates for children in the criminal justice system, took effect on October 1, allowing courts to appoint pro bono attorneys or law school students as advocates for any animals involved in prosecutions concerning custody of the animals or their welfare.

Speaking at the annual conference of the Connecticut Municipal Animal Control Officers Association in September, State Rep. Diana Urban described how the law – named for a dog that was brutally beaten, starved and suffocated – came into being and how it will be implemented.

Desmond’s body was found by a lake in Madison, Conn., wrapped in a plastic bag with a second bag around his neck. He was a victim of an egregious case of domestic violence in which the batterer had previously threatened to strangle his wife. When she and her child left she returned Desmond, a pit bull, to an animal shelter, Urban told the 165 officers attending the conference. The husband subsequently re-adopted the dog, starved and brutally beat it, then strangled it.



**Diana Urban and Ray Connors, director of the Department of Agriculture’s Animal Control Program, spoke to the ACOs at the Mashantucket Pequot Museum.**

“The prosecutor’s summary report was chilling,” Urban said. Nevertheless, under Connecticut law, he was eligible for an Accelerated Rehab program which resulted in the case being expunged from state records.

After significant public and media outcry, and with the support of the law schools at Connecticut, Quinnipiac and Yale Universities and the Department of Agriculture, Desmond’s Law was passed by the General Assembly earlier this year ([See the June 2016 LINK-Letter](#)). Courts will contact one of the law schools or the department of Agriculture to provide legal representation. “It’s a game changer,” she said.

Animal control officers noted that police departments in West Haven and Newtown, Conn. have policies in place that they cannot leave an animal behind with a suspected abuser when they investigate a domestic violence incident.

Urban (D-Stonington), a long-time advocate for animals who co-chairs the Committee on Children and also serves on the Appropriations and Environment Committees, has long recognized The LINK between animal abuse and human violence. “We have 3- and 4-year-olds being expelled from pre-school. If they’re killing animals that’s a symptom of behavioral issues,” she told the officers. “Meanwhile, legislators sit up there in the Capitol in Hartford and ask how we know we have a problem and I’m there saying, ‘Hello?’”

## Study Measures Public Attitudes about Animal Cruelty Punishment

Citing research in psychology, sociology and criminology that focuses on the connections between human and animal violence, psychologists at the University of Central Florida aimed to address how the public equates an acceptable level of punishment for a variety of animal abuse offenses. By manipulating such variables as the age of the perpetrator, location of the crime, and type of animal harmed, the researchers sought to measure participants' beliefs toward animal cruelty and punishment in a variety of realistic scenarios.

The researchers reported that among the 548 students surveyed, self-rated femininity was a more significant predictor of a stronger rating for punishment than was the gender of the perpetrator. The age of the perpetrator and the location of the crime were also significant predictors of punishment ratings. Respondents were divided as to whether an animal cruelty offender should be allowed to be alone with children. They tended to view adult and juvenile offenders differently, and believed that animal abuse committed in a pet kennel deserved more punishment than a similar crime in an animal shelter. Participants generally recommended harsh punishments, reflecting strong sentiments among a university population student body.

-- Bailey, S.K.T., Sims, V.K., & Chin, M.G. (2016). Predictors of views about punishing animal abuse. *Anthrozoös*, 29(1), 21-33.

## Juvenile Courts Welcome Therapy Dogs to Calm People Down

Delaware County, Penna. Juvenile Court has become the latest criminal justice program to allow therapy dogs to come to the courthouse. Eight animal-assisted therapy teams will spend Tuesdays and Wednesdays in courthouse waiting rooms for Juvenile Dependency Court and Juvenile Delinquency Court.

Paws for People, based in Newark, Del., signed a one-year, \$1,000 contract to bring in their Courthouse Companions. The program has already been operating in Cecil and Harford Counties, Md. as a way to calm children and others in the courthouse environment.

"We want to make our courthouse as friendly an environment as possible for those residents and others coming to our courthouse whether that be everywhere from their jury experience to witnesses and children to the care for those with special needs such as our veterans, drug addicted people and others in the mental health system that affect our courts," County Councilman John McBlain told the [Delaware County Times](#).

"Being involved in court proceedings can be very intimidating for anyone but especially for children," said Common Pleas Juvenile Court Judge Nathaniel Nichols. "I hope that these canine therapy teams will help children, their families and others involved in cases be calm and overcome their fears."

Children, older caregivers and others who might benefit from a nuzzle from a friendly therapy companion has the opportunity to reach out to the dogs, who do not approach any children or adults, but rather stay with their handlers. Pets and people are clearly identified with Paws for People leashes and tags.



Officials, and dogs, announce the program

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

### **SPECIAL REPORT: The Link in Farm Country:**

#### **International One Welfare Conference Addresses Multidisciplinary Prevention and Response to Interspecies Violence and Health Issues**

Often overlooked in discussions about veterinary responses to animal abuse and interpersonal violence is the question of how these issues affect large-animal practitioners. Most Link research and practice have focused on companion-animal scenarios, but there is increasing interest in how farmers, and their animals, may be at-risk as well.

This theme was driven home at the inaugural International One Welfare Conference, an offshoot of the One Health movement based on the premise that human and animal health and welfare are interdependent and bound to the health of ecosystems where people and animals live. Held in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada on Sept. 26-27, the conference convened a think tank of authorities from Canada, the U.S., UK, Ireland, Australia and elsewhere to address collaborative multi-agency challenges and responses to human and animal welfare, especially among high-risk populations on farms.



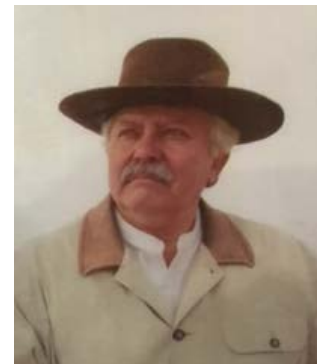
**Catherine Devitt**

Farmers were described as being particularly susceptible to conditions that adversely affect their behavioral, physical and economic health, all of which lead to potential abuse problems for their animals and families. Farmers face such factors as social isolation, economic pressures and heavy debt loads, weather uncertainty, and burdensome compliance with regulatory environments in a rapidly intensifying business.

There's a narrative of stress and unhappiness, fueled by a declining and aging population of stoic farmers. They face social stigma if they talk about mental health issues, and have limited access to mental health services. Many farmers inherited land to which they have a family legacy and a historical heritage, but their interests lie elsewhere, said Catherine Devitt, describing farm animal welfare issues in Ireland that contribute to high suicide rates.

"If you have unhappy farmers you have unhappy animals. Animals amplify the experience that the farmer is going through," she said.

Such job dissatisfaction often manifests in increased rates of relationship disorders. American farmers not only have high rates of suicide but also increased rates of domestic violence, child abuse, animal abuse, and quarreling with elders, said Michael Rosmann, a clinical psychologist, farmer and professor from Iowa.



**Michael Rosmann**

In Canada and Ireland, government veterinary inspectors are considered first responders when reports surface about animal welfare issues on a farm. As with small-animal practitioners, large-animal veterinarians face challenging ethical and practice-management dilemmas about when and how to report suspected animal abuse. Devitt said these include:

- Confusion over the professional parameters, wondering whether the primary responsibility is to the animal or the client.



- Determining an appropriate response in an area in which the veterinarian has not received training and in which there are few protocols to follow.

Ireland has established a collaborative Farm Animal Welfare Advisory Council as an early warning system to identify at-risk cases before they become critical. But the system lacks a structure for cross-reporting between veterinarians and social service agencies.

“We have had cases of social workers coming in the front door to work with the wife and children and the government veterinarian going in the back door to work with the farmer and the animals, with no link between the two, with no communications,” Devitt said.

Veterinarians and social service agencies should coordinate multi-agency responses, Devitt said. These can include: prevention, monitoring and treatment plans with build-in timelines; a universal understanding of the complexity of the human-animal bond, especially among at-risk farmers; and training to help practitioners to assess and understand at-risk situations and procedures for cross-reporting to social service agencies.

“We need to get out of our silos and see veterinarians as first responders and as a resource for at-risk farmers,” she said.

## Cutting-Edge Veterinary Involvement in Multidisciplinary Responses

The One Welfare Conference presented several innovative approaches through which veterinarians are learning more about human health and welfare issues and collaborating with other professionals for more comprehensive assessments and responses to family violence and other social issues.

### CANADA: LINK OUTREACH THROUGH VETERINARY SOCIAL WORK

At the [Western College of Veterinary Medicine](#) in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, a veterinary education committee convened in 2014 to identify issues affecting the medical center’s staff, college faculty, students, interns and residents. Erin Wasson, then a social work student assigned to the college for her practicum, began to develop what became a paid position as Canada’s first veterinary social worker.



**Erin Wasson**

“There were a lot of situations coming in the clinic door where we determined the human situation was impacting the vets’ ability to provide optimal medical care,” she said. Identified issues included depression, risk of suicide, training veterinarians to take care of themselves, and wellness education.

Today, Wasson provides support services for “all the people affected by the interface between people and animals and the human-animal bond.” These include community and courtroom outreach and interagency referrals that address Link issues impacting child welfare and domestic violence. She teaches veterinary staff and students how to respond to clients’ grief and loss when pets die, how to cope with their own sense of loss and ethical dilemmas when animals have to be euthanized, and

communication skills for dealing with resistant clients. She helps staff and clients to assess animals' quality of life, and to respond to trauma and interpersonal relationship problems.

She faces several barriers and challenges in her work. She is constantly correcting myths and misconceptions about who social workers are and what they do, and having to care for herself by finding a suitable work/life balance while handling large caseloads, especially in large-scale animal emergencies.

## SCOTLAND – GRASPING THE “GOLDEN MOMENT”



**Freda Scott-Park**

Freda Scott-Park, a veterinarian-farmer and founder of The Links Group UK, described the origins of Link awareness and training as a result of the pioneering Forging the Links Conference in 2001. Veterinary pathologist Helen Munro had recently introduced British veterinarians to what were then the novel concepts of non-accidental injury, sexual abuse of animals, Munchausen Syndrome by Proxy, and the battered pet syndrome.

Veterinarians were initially resistant to address animal abuse and family violence issues due to a lack of training and confidence in being able to identify animal cruelty and not knowing what to do should they encounter a human victim. Much of that resistance has dissipated and is reflected by

something Munro wrote in 2008:

“Veterinarians in the main tend to be of the tender-hearted variety, caring deeply for the welfare of their animal patients but also frequently feeling compassion for the animal’s owners.”

Growing awareness of these issues led the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons to amend its code of professional conduct to encourage practitioners to report suspected animal abuse. Even more comprehensively, the code says, *“Given the links between animal, child and domestic abuse, a veterinary surgeon or veterinary nurse reporting suspected or actual animal abuse should consider whether a child or adult within that home might also be at risk.”*

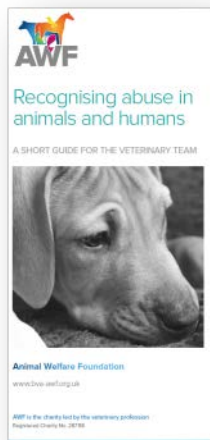
A Links Veterinary Training Initiative is now reaching British veterinarians and veterinary students with the theme, ***“Making the links is making a difference, but breaking the links is breaking the cycles of violence.”***

“We recognized that vets needed support when human victims presented themselves in the surgery, or, more importantly, on the farm. People on farms who are abused are isolated, can’t drive away, and they don’t know where to go. Meanwhile, our colleagues in human healthcare realized that they needed our assistance when there was an animal at risk in a violent household,” she said.

Today, [The Links Group UK](http://www.thelinks.org.uk) is building resilience among veterinary students, training them on The Link and teaching them how the human-animal bond can break down and where they can go to get help for abuse cases. A collaboration with Crimestoppers addresses animal abuse recognition and response. A program planned for 2017 will include an online curriculum to help human healthcare professionals to understand animal welfare issues.

A promotional graphic for Crimestoppers UK. It features a red header with the text 'WORKING WITH CRIMESTOPPERS' and a list of bullet points: 'You can't be identified', 'You can give information online or by phone', 'Your call will never be recorded or traced', 'The online form is encrypted to ensure anonymity', 'You won't have to give your name or address', 'You won't have to make a statement to police', 'You won't have to go to court', 'You may qualify for a reward', 'We're NOT the police', and 'We're an independent charity'. Below this is a red box with the text 'TELL US WHAT YOU KNOW, NOT WHO YOU ARE', the phone number '0800 555 111', and the website 'www.crimestoppers-uk.org'. To the right is a photo of a dog wearing a brown vest. At the bottom, there are logos for BVAQ, RCVS, and Crimestoppers, along with the text 'WHO ELSE IS GETTING HURT?'.

New Links Group publications include a new Briefing Note, modeled after similar publications in New Zealand, and a larger Guidance. These introduce practitioners to the concept of non-accidental, human-caused injuries and strategies to work with clients, who may be hostile, to assess and respond to abuse. The publications offer “ADVR” practice protocols that standardize approaches to a difficult situation when family violence is suspected: Asking, Validating, Documenting, and Referral/reporting. They include note-taking, communication skills and addressing patient-client-practitioner confidentiality issues.



Scott-Park uses the term “the golden moment” to describe the opportunity to extend compassion to a victim of violence – and British veterinarians are increasingly recognizing that they will, in fact, see victims of violence. “Veterinarians have an opportunity to grasp the golden moment and extend a paw of friendship. This single gesture of friendship may be the first time anyone has shown any kindness towards a victim,” she said. “That’s a very powerful position to be in.”

## AUSTRALIA – ESTABLISHING A ONE WELFARE PORTAL

Anne Fawcett, a veterinary lecturer at the University of Sydney and the author of a forthcoming book on veterinary ethics, described her work in setting up a One Welfare portal in Australia that is empowering future veterinarians to be the leading advocates for animal welfare. Eight universities have collaborated on a scenario-based teaching curriculum that addresses such overarching themes as animal welfare science, ethics, and issues affecting companion, wild, production, research, aquatic, sport, and working animals.

“The animal welfare landscape is changing,” she said.

Fawcett noted how animal hoarding statistics in her country are comparable to other Western nations but that Australian veterinarians lag behind their counterparts in the U.S., U.K. and Canada regarding the reporting of suspected animal abuse. Although a majority of the Australian public believe veterinarians are already considered mandated reporters, the Australian Veterinary Association has resisted efforts to report based on the premise that clients would refrain from bringing animals to see practitioners if they feared they might be reported (*See the [December 2015 LINK-Letter](#)*).



Anne Fawcett

However, veterinarians have obligations to both their animal patients and human clients, she said. The process of mandatory reporting can be supported only in a context in which four conditions exist for veterinarians:

1. They are trained to recognize the signs of animal abuse;
2. They are trained to sensitively elicit a history from clients, some of whom may be victims of abuse themselves;
3. They are supported by appropriate, responsive authorities; and
4. They are reasonably protected from legal recriminations.

## Animal Hoarding in Rural Communities



**Jyothi Robertson**

Several speakers at the One Welfare Conference addressed the emerging issue of animal hoarding and its adverse effects on individual and community health. The One Health model that bridges human and veterinary medicine was repeatedly seen as a way to bring all stakeholders together through open sharing that transcends sectors and jurisdictions, diminishes confusion, and increases the likelihood of resolving problems.

Veterinarians may not recognize that the feline upper respiratory infections, ringworms, dental disorders, gingivitis, infectious peritonitis, fleas, tapeworms, or herpes virus they see in an individual patient are indicators of a much larger population of hoarded animals at home living under stressful conditions, said shelter medicine consultant Jyothi Robertson.

She described four types of animal hoarders:

- those who rescue animals from euthanasia;
- those who believe they have a special ability to communicate with animals;
- those who need animals' unconditional love;
- and pathologic altruists who literally love their animals to death.

Caring for animals gives them control, self-esteem, and a heightened sense of identity. When their caregiving capacity is exceeded the situation spirals out of control, leading to animal and self-neglect.

Animal hoarding is one form of object hoarding, marked by:

- the acquisition of and failure to discard large numbers of possessions that appear to be of limited or useless value;
- living spaces that are sufficiently cluttered to preclude the use of living space for the purposes for which they were intended; and
- significant distress or impairment in human functioning.



**Christiana Bratiotis**

Christiana Bratiotis, of the School of Social Work at Portland State University in Oregon, described distinctions between hoarding and squalor. The former refers to a volume of possessions, while squalor refers to personal or environmental filth or degradation resulting from neglect. Many hoarding environments are not squalid, while some squalor situations do not involve hoarding.

Object hoarding tends to begin in childhood about the age of 13 and worsens over the life course, Bratiotis said. The average age at first treatment is 50. Object hoarders tend to be single men and have family histories. An estimated 5% of the U.S. population are hoarders.

Object hoarders save things because they have sentimental value, may be useful, or are perceived as being beautiful. They may compulsively buy things or acquire them because they are free. But hoarding is just the tip of the iceberg, she said, and is often underpinned by mental health, neurobiology, family histories, sense of loss, evolutionary biology, and challenges to the individual's physical health and ability to make rational executive decisions.

Hoarding often accompanies other psychological disorders including depression, ADHD, anxiety, OCD, phobias, PTSD, kleptomania, substance abuse, and eating and bipolar disorders.

Robertson and Bratitot expressed concern over the lack of adequate treatment options; hoarders resist interventions and mistrust people who try to get rid of animals or things that are important to them. Costly, time-consuming, ongoing monitoring is critical to maintain gains but difficult for resource-strapped agencies to effect.

Strategies that have been tried include:

- using community resources, such as neighbors in rural communities;
- guardianship laws that allow animal protection agencies to oversee the animals' welfare;
- providing pro bono or low-cost pet food, sterilization and veterinary services for the animals;
- community hoarding alliances that include animal care & control, code enforcement, and public and mental health; and
- developing a resource list of agencies that can be called when a hoarding case arises.



**Stefane Gravelle**

Such an approach has been implemented in rural communities in Manitoba, where the [Prairie Mountain Interagency Hoarding Coalition](#) was formed in 2010 in the wake of several high-profile fatalities caused by fires in hoarding residences. "We recognized that no one agency has all the necessary tools to respond or prevent hoarding, that these issues are complex and time-consuming, that relapse rates are high, and that mental health issues are a core factor" said Stefane Gravelle.

The coalition includes four key groups:

- first responders (police, fire, ambulance);
- secondary responders (animal welfare officials, veterinarians, code enforcement, public health, fire prevention, child welfare);
- healthcare providers (ER staff, psychologists, crisis services, general practitioners); and
- recovery and prevention resources (relatives, friends, neighbors, home care aides, nonprofits, landlords).

Animal hoarding and the human-animal bond are interlinked," said Robertson, noting that for these individuals the animals are their primary source of emotional and social support and identity. "We have to recognize that this is a bond that hoarders have, that removing the animals doesn't work, and that's why there's 100% recidivism."

### *Permission to Reprint*

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## NEWS FROM LOCAL LINK COALITIONS

### HAVEN

HUMAN/ANIMAL VIOLENCE EDUCATION NETWORK

Making Berkshire County Safer  
For People and Animals

### HAVEN Coalition Produces Two Videos

Western Massachusetts' LINK Coalition – HAVEN (Human/Animal Violence Education Network) – has produced two videos to help educate the public about how animal abuse is LINKed to human violence and what the Berkshire County organization is doing to prevent all forms of family violence. A 98-second [Public Service Announcement](#) has been posted on Vimeo and serves as an excellent brief introduction to what a local LINK coalition can do. [A more extensive 16:44 video](#) features a series of interviews with HAVEN stakeholders.

“Animal cruelty, abuse and neglect issues are almost always indicative of some other problem,” Pittsfield Police Chief Michael Wynn tells a training audience in one segment. “Whether it’s child abuse, drug abuse, or drug trafficking, having this relationship between the law enforcement side and the animal control side -- if we can’t get in there any other way we can always get in on an animal call. We’ve had remarkable success.”

“Many times we see a direct link between animal abuse and a domestic violence case. The party is lashing out at the pet owner by saying, ‘I’m not going to hurt you: I’m going to hurt your animal to get back at you, to get even with you.’ I call it a hostage situation,” Pittsfield Animal Control Officer Joseph Chague tells the camera.

Melinda Thomas, a domestic violence survivor, describes how she lost two animals who were brutally killed in a domestic violence situation. When she went to court to seek a protection-from-abuse order, she was astounded to learn that at the time she could put her possessions on the restraining order but not her dog and cat who had been with her longer than she had been married.

“When he found out that I had gone to the courts he was furious,” she relates, explaining how he told her that if she and their daughter left there was no way she would be able to take her dog and cat with them. “So I stayed, not wanting to leave them behind.” He subsequently beheaded the animals, leaving the bodies in her bed and their heads in the bathtub. He left a note that said, “This is what will happen to you if you leave,” she tearfully recalls. (Massachusetts later enacted pet protective order legislation.)



### Swedish Coalition Addresses European 4-H Groups

Sweden's Link group, [VOOV \(Veterinär Omtanke Om Våldsutsatta: Veterinary Concerned for the Abused\)](#) was able to bring the Link message to Europe's 4-H community. Nathalie Nordén tells *The LINK-Letter* that she spoke on Sept. 16 to the European Federation of City Farms (EFCF) Conference in Växjö, and generated considerable interest. Norden, chairwoman of VOOV, spoke on “See the connection” (“Se sambandet”) and described current research and practice on what all staff working with animals and at-risk youth should be aware of concerning possible domestic violence and animal abuse. EFCF represents agricultural projects in an increasingly urbanizing society where people can get in touch with animals, nature, the environment, and each other. VOOV has seven NGO members who provide foster care for animal victims of violence.



The Se Sambandet Link group [campaigned](#) this summer to raise awareness and to gather signatures for a legislative proposal that would require Swedish insurance companies to cover veterinary care for pets who have been hurt by a family member. Currently, such self-inflicted non-accidental injuries are not covered under veterinary pet insurance programs: only if the animal was hurt by a stranger is coverage available ([See the March 2016 LINK-Letter](#)).

## *BUILDING AWARENESS ABOUT THE LINK*

### **California Children's Conference Learns about the Connections**

San Bernardino County, California's [Animal Cruelty Task Force](#) came out in force at the two-day-long, 30<sup>th</sup> Annual Children's Network conference. The group had a literature table and presented on "The Cruelty Connection Between Animal Abuse and Human Violence." The conference attracted over 1,000 attendees. Task Force members Claudia Swing, Debbie Ploghaus and Amy Raines were joined by County Supervisor Josie Gonzales. What a great way to spread the Link word!



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

### ***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 passed both houses and has been sent to the Governor's office awaiting a response by Oct. 22.



**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 York S7394/A10661** would extend protections offered to the pets of domestic violence survivors by giving courts discretion to forbid contact between the abuser and any pet that is cared for by the survivor. **S7394** passed the Senate on June 7 and was referred to the Assembly Judiciary Committee.



**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*



**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.



**Michigan H5670** would make it a misdemeanor, punishable by a \$500 fine and 100 hours of community service, to inflict cruel treatment on a companion animal in the presence of a child. The bill was approved with amendments by the Criminal Justice committee on Sept. 20 and referred for a second reading.



**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 on June 7 and was referred to the Assembly Codes Committee.

### *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 Hoarding*



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

### *“CASA for Animals”*



**Connecticut HB 5344** allows 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 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** 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. The bill was amended to only require law enforcement agencies to include arrests for animal cruelty in their annual reports to the Governor. The amended bill was signed into law on Aug. 29.



**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.



**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.

### *Cross Reporting*



**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.



**Michigan HB5779** would require animal control officers to report suspected child abuse. The bill is in the House Committee on Families, Children and Seniors.



**Michigan HB5780** would require Child Protective Services employees who have reasonable cause to suspect animal abuse or neglect, to make oral and written reports to an animal control officer or law enforcement officer. The employee's identity would remain confidential and be revealed only with consent or by judicial process. CPS employees acting in good faith would be immune from civil or criminal liability; failure to make such a report or knowingly making a false report would be misdemeanor crimes. The bill is in the House Committee on Families, Children and Seniors.



**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 was signed into law on March 1.

### *Animal Sexual Assault*



**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** establishes the crime of bestiality as a Class A misdemeanor for a first offense and a Class B felony for subsequent offenses. Convicted offenders will be required to submit to psychological assessment and counseling at their own expense. The bill was signed in to law in June.



**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. The measure is in the House of Commons.

### *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.

## THE LINK... IN THE NEWS

### Domestic Violence Murder-Suicide Also Ensnarers Family Dog

A tragic murder-suicide in a domestic violence case in Hudson, Ohio also involved the shooting of the family's great Dane. Stephen Bice texted his three sons, aged 14, 16 and 18, with a phony offer to meet them as a way to get them out of the house where he broke in the door and killed his wife of 22 years, Kristi Bice. The family's dog was shot during the break-in and was reported to be recovering at a veterinary hospital. Kristi Bice, who grabbed a .38 caliber revolver but didn't have time to pull the trigger, was then fatally shot four times before Stephen Bice used his last bullet on himself. [Cleveland.com](http://Cleveland.com) reported that the boys were fearful of leaving their mother alone because of earlier death threats and repeated violations of protection orders. The 18-year-old had slept on a sofa with a baseball bat for months in order to protect her. Kristi Bice had texted her adult daughter that she feared that Stephen's text was a ploy to lure the boys away. "I hope he isn't planning on getting them out of the house so he can blow me up," she texted shortly before she died.



Kristi Bice



Ibrahim Secic

### Hate Crime Charged in Attack on Man and His Dog

Police in St. Louis, Mo. charged a man with what appeared to be a racially-motivated hate crime after he allegedly attacked an African-American man and his dog. The [St. Louis Post-Dispatch](http://St.LouisPost-Dispatch) reported that Ibrahim Secic, 23, was charged with resisting arrest and felony assault motivated by discrimination. Court documents said that Secic, who is white, saw a black man walking his dogs about 7 a.m. on Sept. 14 and started yelling racial slurs and told him to get off the street. Secic allegedly ran after the man, hit him in the back of his head, and then hit one of the man's dogs in the face. Bail was set at \$10,000.



Sonny Anderson

### Animal Abuser Sentenced in Hit-and-Run Homicide

An Alameda County, Calif. court has sentenced a man with an extensive history of crimes against animals and people to 37 years-to-life in prison for killing a 14-year-old boy in a hit-and-run. Sonny Anderson, 36, of San Lorenzo, was high on methamphetamine on Nov. 14, 2014, when an Alameda County sheriff's deputy tried to pull him over for a traffic violation, the [East Bay Times](http://EastBayTimes) reported. Anderson drove away recklessly, ran a red light, and struck Ivan Cruz who was riding a scooter. Anderson was also convicted of animal abuse for kicking a sheriff deputy's K-9 dog.

Anderson's first felony conviction was for slaughtering animals at a petting zoo in 1999. In 2009 he broke into a 74-year-old woman's house and beat her during a home invasion. Anderson has a history of 25 convictions, all of which had been settled by plea bargains. "This was the first trial," said Leroy Moyer, founder of Voices for Pets following the sentencing. "Had they treated his early violent crimes more seriously he would have been in prison."

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

## *LINK TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES*

**Oct. 12 – Pittsfield, Mass.:** The [HAVEN Link Coalition](#) will hold its first meeting of the season at the Berkshire Humane Society.

**Oct. 13 – Oklahoma City, Okla.:** The [Oklahoma Link Coalition](#) will hold its regular meeting.

**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.

**Oct. 19 – Spartanburg, S. Car.:** Barbara Boat and Clif Flynn will present on “Cruelty to Animals – Cruelty to People” at the Academy on Violence & Abuse’s [2016 Global Health Summit on Violence and Abuse](#).

**Oct. 26 – Denver, Colo.:** Diane Balkin will present on “From Crime Scene to Courtroom” at the [Animal Grantmakers](#) Conference.

**Oct. 26 – (online):** Phil Arkow will present two webinars on Interpersonal Violence and Animal Cruelty for the National Organization for Victim Assistance’s [Victim Assistance Academy](#).

**Oct. 26 – West Palm Beach, Fla.:** The [South Florida Link Coalition](#) will hold its regular meeting.

**Nov. 2-3 – Saskatoon, Sask., Canada:** Phil Arkow will present on The Link as the John Gunion Rutherford Memorial Lecture at the Western College of Veterinary Medicine, speak to the Saskatchewan Veterinary Medical Association, and lead a [community workshop](#) for social work and animal protection advocates.

**Nov. 3 – (various locations):** The One Health Commission, One Health Initiative, and One Health Platform will sponsor the 1<sup>st</sup> 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 2<sup>nd</sup> annual conference, “Domestic Violence and Animal Abuse: International Perspectives.” Speakers will include Lydia Tong, Catherine Tiplady, Allie Phillips, Frank Ascione, Freda Scott-Park, and many others.

**Nov. 9 – Newark, N.J.:** Phil Arkow will train the [New Jersey Department of Child Protection and Permanency](#) on “Animal Abuse and Dangerous Animals as Risk Factors for Child Abuse and Other Family Violence”.

**Nov. 12 – Colmar, Pa.:** Phil Arkow will present on The Link for the [Montgomery County Women’s Center](#).

**Nov. 15 – Portland, Ore.:** Maya Gupta will present at the National Council on Pet Population and Society of Animal Welfare Administrators’ [2016 Research Symposium](#) on broken human-animal bonds.

**Nov. 16 – 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.

**Dec. 6 – Newark, N.J.:** Phil Arkow will train the [New Jersey Department of Child Protection and Permanency](#) on “Animal Abuse and Dangerous Animals as Risk Factors for Child Abuse and Other Family Violence”.

**Mar. 31, 2017 – Nashville, Tenn.:** Phil Arkow will present four programs in a Link track at the [American Animal Hospital Association](#)’s Yearly Conference.



## ABOUT THE NATIONAL LINK COALITION



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

### Members of the National Link Coalition Steering Committee

#### Phil Arkow, Coordinator

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

#### Lesley Ashworth

Founder/President, American Veterinary Charitable Fund  
Consultant, Ohio Domestic Violence Network  
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Contract Attorney, Animal Legal Defense Fund  
Past President, Int'l. Veterinary Forensic Sciences Assn.  
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#### Barbara W. Boat, Ph.D.

Associate Professor, Univ. of Cincinnati College of Medicine  
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#### Cym Doggett, LCSW

Project Director, Southern Regional CAC,  
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Chair, Education Committee,  
National Adult Protective Services Association  
Shawnee, Okla.

#### Maria Luisa O'Neill

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

Animal Welfare Scientist, Animal Welfare Division  
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Retired Associate Judge, Baltimore City Circuit Court,  
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#### Martha Smith-Blackmore, DVM

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#### Hugh Tebault III

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#### John Thompson

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