



# NATIONAL LINK COALITION

Working together to stop violence against people and animals

**The LINK-Letter Vol. 8, No. 12 December, 2015**

*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



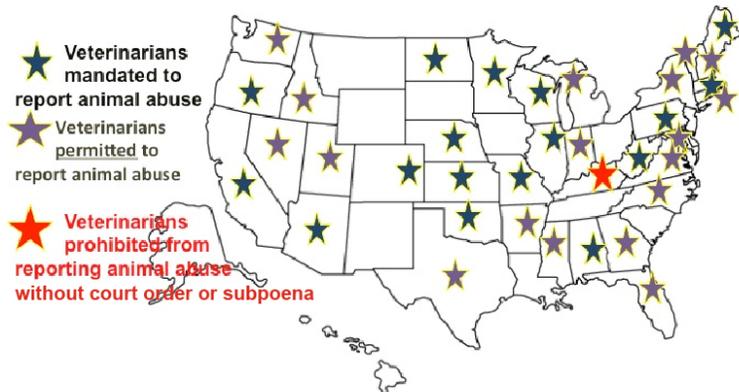
## ***ANIMAL ABUSE AND... VETERINARY MEDICINE***

### **Mandatory Reporting by Veterinarians of Animal Abuse Endorsed by American Animal Hospital Association**

In a major step forward, the American Animal Hospital Association is now supporting the mandatory reporting by veterinarians of suspected animal abuse and encourages the adoption of laws requiring such reporting with immunity from civil and criminal liability when such reports are made in good faith. Previously, AAHA had supported mandatory reporting only when efforts to educate clients had failed or were inappropriate.

Citing the presence of studies linking animal abuse with other forms of violence, AAHA's Board of Directors adopted its latest [Animal Abuse Reporting Position Statement](#) in November. AAHA had issued previous policy statements on the subject in 1995 and 2009; the current statement is the organization's strongest in terms of requiring practitioners to report suspected animal abuse and puts AAHA's policy on par with the American Veterinary Medical Association's 2012 policy statement which "considers it the responsibility of the veterinarian to report such cases to appropriate authorities, whether or not reporting is mandated by law."

"Reporting suspicions of animal abuse is important as it will trigger an investigation that may ultimately protect both animals and humans. It upholds the veterinary oath to prevent animal suffering and promote public health," reads the new AAHA statement.



The AVMA's Veterinary Oath was amended in 2012 to include, for the first time, recognition of the veterinarian's responsibility to benefit society through the protection of animal welfare and the prevention of animal suffering in addition to more traditional responsibilities vis-à-vis animal health.

Currently, 17 states mandate veterinarians to report animal cruelty, aggravated animal cruelty, animal fighting, or animal abuse committed by another practitioner; 18 other states permit such reporting on a voluntary basis. All of these 35 states are believed to provide veterinarians with varying degrees of immunity from liability. Kentucky protects the veterinarian/client relationship by prohibiting their release of information about a client or care of a client's animal without a court order or subpoena.

National veterinary associations in Canada, the United Kingdom, and New Zealand have issued similar policy statements in recent years based on increasing evidence that animal abuse is often linked to domestic violence, child maltreatment and elder abuse.

Lila Miller, DVM, Vice-President for Shelter Medicine for the ASPCA, served on the advisory committee that updated the position statement as requested by the AAHA Executive Board, and sought input from numerous people within the Link community.

## **AAHA Animal Abuse Reporting Position Statement**

Veterinary professionals are likely to encounter many forms of animal abuse ranging from minor neglect to malicious harm.



The American Animal Hospital Association supports the reporting of suspicions of animal abuse to the appropriate authorities. The Association encourages the adoption of laws mandating veterinary professionals to report suspicions of animal abuse and providing immunity from legal liability when filing such reports in good faith. Veterinary professionals should be familiar with animal cruelty laws and their veterinary practice act, including any mandatory reporting requirements.

Studies have shown there is a link between animal abuse and other forms of violence, including child, spousal, and elder abuse. Reporting suspicions of animal abuse is important as it will trigger an investigation that may ultimately protect both animals and humans. It upholds the veterinary oath to prevent animal suffering and promote public health.

Veterinarians should seek education about animal cruelty and the profession should provide training on the recognition, documentation, and reporting of animal abuse and the development of forensic models. Collaboration with animal and human welfare groups, law enforcement and other professionals within communities is crucial to improve response and reduce the incidence of animal abuse.

Veterinarians are referred to the American Veterinary Medical Association and the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association for information and resources on the signs, recognition, and reporting of animal abuse.

***Adopted by the American Animal Hospital Association Board of Directors November 1995. Revised October 2009. Last revised November 2015.***

## Journal Article Reviews Veterinary Response to Animal Abuse

The identification of a “battered pets syndrome,” which put the veterinary profession on parallel footing with counterparts in human medicine who respond to abused children, women and elders, expanded the veterinarian’s role as an advocate for animals’ welfare. This expansion, formalized more recently by national veterinary oaths and professional codes of practice, now widely includes the recognition of, response to, and prevention of animal abuse. A new journal article reviews these changes, discusses animal abuse as a matter of animal welfare and public health, and summarizes research describing animal abuse as a possible sentinel indicator and predictor of interpersonal violence.



**Phil Arkow & friend**

Writing in the New Zealand-based open-access, peer-reviewed *Veterinary Medicine: Research and Reports*, National Link Coalition Coordinator Phil Arkow identifies five steps that helped build human healthcare’s response to child abuse, domestic violence and elder abuse, and that are analogous to forces in contemporary veterinary practice. The article familiarizes practitioners with terminology used in animal cruelty investigations. It describes clinical presentations, client profiles and behaviors, and environmental conditions that may raise a practitioner’s index of suspicion of possible animal maltreatment.

Arkow reviews protocols that practitioners may employ to respond compassionately and effectively to suspected animal abuse and to enhance successful law enforcement investigations and prosecutions. Such responses are presented as a way to unite human and veterinary medicine in common concern for vulnerable, victimized and at-risk populations. Recognizing and responding to suspected animal maltreatment positions veterinarians as an essential part of public health responses to break the cycles of violence affecting animals and human members of the family and community.

-- Arkow, P. (2015). **Recognizing and responding to cases of suspected animal cruelty, abuse and neglect: What the veterinarian needs to know.** *Veterinary Medicine: Research and Reports*, 6, 349-359. DOI <http://dx.doi.org/10.2147/VMRR.S87198>

## What Does the Public Think About Veterinary Mandated Reporting?

While 17 U.S. states and three Canadian provinces mandate veterinarians to report suspected animal abuse, and professional codes of practice in the U.S., Canada, the United Kingdom, and New Zealand encourage such reports, the Australian Veterinary Association (AVA) only recommends that veterinarians should report and is opposed to mandatory reporting under a belief that such a requirement would discourage owners from bringing animals in for essential treatment.

A new research report questions the validity of this belief. Donna Acutt, Tania Signal and Nik Taylor conducted an extensive 52-question survey of 209 citizens to identify the public’s perception of mandatory veterinary reporting in an Australian context. A surprising 76% of participants believed – incorrectly – that veterinarians already were required to report. Veterinarians were ranked second only to RSPCA officials among professionals perceived by the public to be mandated reporters.

However, an overwhelming majority of respondents (82%) agreed with the AVA position that mandated reporting might discourage some people from taking animals to veterinarians. When asked to rank-order other reasons to not impose mandatory reporting, respondents noted veterinarians’ potential loss of income, inadequate training in recognizing animal abuse, confidentiality concerns, and lack of knowledge of community resources.

“The fact that such a large portion of the sample incorrectly identified veterinarians as having to report suspected animal abuse may require a re-think of the current stance of the AVA,” they wrote. “If the majority of the community already believes that veterinarians will report instances of suspected abuse, does the prima facie reason for their stance regarding non-mandatory reporting retain face validity?”

They described practitioners as being in the unenviable position of meeting community expectations as a key stakeholder in animal welfare but not being legally supported if they do report. They also noted that, given the links between animal abuse and domestic violence, vulnerable women and children with pets have fewer options to leave violent situations if they do not have veterinary support.

-- Acutt, D., Signal, T., & Taylor, N. (2015). Mandated reporting of suspected animal harm by Australian veterinarians: Community attitudes. *Anthrozoös*, 28(3), 437-447.

## The AVA Policy on Animal Abuse

The Australian Veterinary Association policy, adopted in December 2013, cites The Link as the rationale for voluntary, rather than mandatory, reporting of suspected animal abuse to relevant authorities. [Policy 1.2](#) reads:



### Policy

Veterinarians should report suspected animal abuse to the relevant authorities. Veterinarians should not be required by law to report instances of suspected animal abuse as this may discourage owners from seeking essential treatment for their injured animals.

### Background

Cruelty to animals is an offence in all jurisdictions. The ethical obligation to report abuse is made not only for the animal's welfare but because of the well-researched connection between animal and child abuse and domestic violence and sociopathic tendencies. It has been demonstrated that there is a complex interrelationship between animal and child cruelty and a correlation between animal harm and other forms of psycho-social distress. Veterinarians because of their training and expertise are uniquely placed to identify cases of animal abuse.

### Guidelines

The first priority of veterinarians attending these animals should be the welfare of the animal. The duty of care the veterinarian has for the patient should also extend beyond the immediate injury and include prevention of further abuse. This may include veterinarians seizing animals if allowed to do so under animal cruelty legislation. The relevant authorities should be contacted so that they deal with the suspected perpetrator directly to protect the animal and the veterinarian. Protection of the personal safety of the reporting veterinarian and veterinary staff is important as animal abusers could be a danger to them.

### Other recommendations

Legislation should be developed to give statutory protection against litigation and other reprisals towards veterinarians who report animal abuse is encouraged. The profession and community should be educated in recognizing cases of potential animal abuse and its relevance to violence against people

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

### **Saginaw, Mich. Opens Nation's Newest Pet-Friendly Shelter**

Domestic violence survivors in Saginaw County, Mich., no longer have to worry about where their pets will wind up, thanks to the opening of the nation's newest [SAF-T](#) (Sheltering Animals and Families Together™) pet-friendly domestic violence shelter.

At a grand opening on Oct. 22, the [Underground Railroad Family Violence Shelter](#) formally began to accept pets on-site through its Paws 4 Hope program. SAF-T Founder Allie Phillips was on hand for the event, which followed four months of testing out the program to work out any problems.



**The new Underground Railroad kennels shelter Saginaw's pet survivors of domestic abuse.**

Mari McKenzie, Underground Railroad Treasurer, told the [MLive news network](#) that she got the idea for Paws 4 Hope after reading a November 2010 article about The Link in *O Magazine*. "The article discussed that victims of domestic violence were not leaving their abusers because they feared for the safety of their dog or cat," she said.

Though donations from the William McNally Family Foundation and other donors, four residential bedrooms were transformed into pet-friendly rooms with three indoor-outdoor dog kennels and an outdoor dog run area. Smaller pets are housed with their families indoors. Since the soft opening last April, three dogs have lived within the shelter.

"Pets are family and the more pets are family, the more they're going to be targeted by an abuser," said Phillips, who also serves on the National Link Coalition's steering committee. "What's also very frightening is that we're getting a very large body of research now that's telling us when children witness animal abuse, they are at increased odds to becoming violent themselves – against people and against animals." That risk is even higher if domestic violence is thrown into the mix.

The program is the third SAF-T shelter in Michigan. Currently, there are 96 pet-friendly shelters in 37 states plus three in Canada, Australia and New Zealand, with four additional shelters in progress.

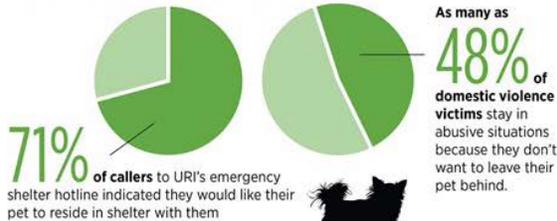


**The outdoor play yard for the dogs (left) and the brightly-lit kennels comprise thoroughly modern animal housing facilities.**

## IMPACT OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ON PETS AND THEIR OWNERS



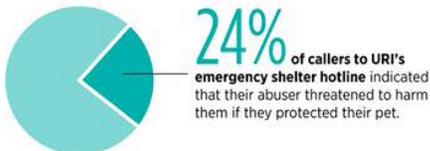
There is a great need among victims of domestic violence and their pets for co-sheltering programs that allow them to live in shelter together.



In addition to harming a partner, abusers often leverage pets as a means of control, by either threatening pets or through acts of physical violence.



Pets are part of the family. As a result, many victims of domestic violence will attempt to protect their pets from their abuser. However, this often puts the victim at even greater risk.



Unfortunately there are very few co-sheltering programs in the U.S., and URIPALS is the only co-sheltering program available in New York City.



There simply aren't enough co-sheltering programs to meet the need.

Urban Resource Institute's **URIPALS**<sup>®</sup>  
People and Animals Living Safely

is the only program in New York City and one of the few in the U.S. that allows domestic violence survivors to co-shelter (live in shelter with their pets).

**Take Action.** Help us expand the URIPALS program and make a difference in the lives of domestic violence victims and their families. Visit [www.urinyc.org/donate](http://www.urinyc.org/donate)

## URIPALS Symposium Promotes The Link in New York City



New York City's new [URIPALS](#) -- THE Urban Resource Institute's People and Animals Living Safely -- shelter convened a roundtable discussion on Oct. 14 on the intersection of domestic violence and animal welfare. Allie Phillips presented a program on [SAF-T](#) -- the Sheltering Animals and Families Together™ program.

At left, URIPALS has created a colorful, effective infographic depicting how The Link impacts domestic violence survivors in general and specific calls to URIPALS' hotline. The infographic is posted on the [URIPALS website](#).

## Congressional Briefing Held on the PAWS Act

In conjunction with Sens. Kelly Ayotte (R-NH) and Gary Peters (D-MI), the ASPCA, HSUS, Animal Welfare Institute and Humane Legislative Fund held an hour-long briefing for Congressional leaders on Dec. 8. Speakers at the panel discussion also included representatives from the Safety Network for Abused Animals & People (SNAAP) and the National Network to End Domestic Violence. The Pet and Women Safety Act (S.1559/H.R. 1258) will expand federal domestic violence protections to include pets, and make federal funds available to help domestic violence shelters to become pet-friendly.

## ***ANIMAL ABUSE AND... CHILD MALTREATMENT***

### **Childhood Exposure to Animal Abuse as a Marker for Adult Anxiety and Depression**

Researchers have long noted that the mere presence of companion animals in a child's environment may not be as significant as the child's degree of bonding or attachment to those pets. A new research study has examined how the degree of childhood bonding with pets can affect the development of subsequent internalizing mental health issues such as anxiety and depression.

Alberta Girardi and Joanna D. Pozzulo of Carleton University surveyed 318 undergraduate students to investigate whether childhood experiences with animals are associated with symptoms of depression and anxiety in early adulthood. They thought that children whose pets are abused or killed might be expected to experience emotional distress, and that frequent or severe abuse might contribute to the development of internalizing mental health problems.

Their findings reported that students who had been exposed to aggression against pets had significantly higher anxiety and depression scores than those who were not so exposed. The results suggested that bonding with pets may support mental health and that exposure to animal cruelty may lead to the development of internalizing symptoms.

"The results also support the contention that both bonding with pets and exposure to pet aggression should be considered when investigating the association between experiences with pets and mental health," they wrote. "Interventions for the protection of children may be indicated in cases of animal cruelty."

**"Social workers who investigate child maltreatment may be advised to refer children who are exposed to animal cruelty for counseling. Interventions for the protection of children may be indicated in cases of animal cruelty."**

"Social workers who investigate child maltreatment may be advised to refer children who are exposed to animal cruelty for counseling," they concluded, also suggesting that abused animals should be removed from a child's home to protect the child from further emotional distress as well as to protect the animal from physical harm. "Clinicians should consider addressing issues that arise from exposure to pet aggression during the therapeutic process."

-- Girardi, A., & Pozzulo, J.D. (2015). Childhood experiences with family pets and internalizing symptoms in early adulthood. *Anthrozoös*, 28(3), 421-436.

### ***Permission to Reprint***

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## Colorado Research Project Examines Children's Exposure to Animal Abuse and Domestic Violence

While quantitative research has estimated the numbers of children exposed to domestic violence and/or animal abuse, few studies have taken a qualitative look at how children respond to such multifaceted violence. In the first report from what is the largest study of its kind, an extensive series of bilingual interviews with 242 Colorado children who have experienced intimate partner violence, researchers identified five distinct themes marking the complexities of animal abuse within homes marked by domestic violence – and its impact upon children.

**“My brother some-  
times tortures our  
cat. I used to, too. I  
used to torture my  
other cats. I don't  
now, but my  
brother still does.”**  
*-- Boy, Age 7*

The multi-year longitudinal study sought to answer two key questions: what do children living in homes marked by IPV recount about pets being threatened or harmed, and what steps do they take to protect these animals? A significant number of children took preemptive and protective measures and direct intervention to come to their companion animals' rescue.

**“My dog was having  
accidents. [My mother's  
partner] said 'I'm gonna  
kick this dog – this dog  
is going to be gone.’”**  
*-- Boy, Age 8*

Of the 242 children aged 7 – 12 in the larger study, 58 (24%) reported that someone in the home had either threatened to harm or kill a pet and/or saw or heard someone kill or harm an animal. Of the 58 children interviewed for the current study, 38% indicated that someone had hurt or killed their pet, 27% reported threats to their pets, and 35% reported both threats and actual harm or killing. Nearly 78% of children who experienced threats or harm reported that they had taken action to protect their pets.

Five core themes emerged from the study:

- **Animal abuse as an expression of IPV power and control** (50% of participants)
  - Threats and/or harm of animals to perpetuate fear in the home, isolate the mother or prevent her from leaving
- **Animal abuse as a form of animal punishment** (24% of participants)
  - Excessive punishment of an animal for undesirable behaviors
- **Cruelty to animals perpetrated by siblings** (16% of participants)
  - Intentional cruelty to animals or threats motivated by a sibling's negative emotions. In some cases the interviewed children themselves were involved in the cruelty.
- **Preventative steps to protect the animal from the mother's partner** (16% of participants)
  - Children's strategies to remove or relocate animals to perceived safe locations to prevent potential interactions between their mother's partner and the pet
- **Direct intervention involving the mother's partner** (19% of participants)
  - Children's steps taken when a pet was in immediate danger of being harmed

“Our findings suggest that children are not only witness to these [power and control] tactics, but that they are able to identify threats to harm pets and/or acts of cruelty toward a pet as being intended to influence their maternal caregiver's behavior or to retaliate for acts of independence,” they wrote. The study also added new dimensions to the interactions of children and animals in homes marked by IPV. Some animals were harmed or threatened to punish a child's misbehavior, which the researchers saw as leading to further emotional distress in the child. Animal abuse may also be a component of inter-sibling

rivalries which are exacerbated in IPV homes and which are marked by shifting alliances, competition, empathy deficits regarding sibling mistreatment, and collusion with abuse perpetrators.

**“My dad was very upset before Christmas with my mom because she had talked to her family in Mexico and was fighting with her when he said that he would burn my dog in our grill.”**

**-- Girl, Age 11**

Companion animals living in dysfunctional households may be more aggressive as a result of maltreatment or training that reinforces aggressive behavior; the animals' subsequent aggression may result in family members then abusing them to control or punish them, setting off a repetitive cycle of interspecies violence.

The large number of children who took steps to protect their pets from abuse suggested not only that pets are important to children, but also that pets are important resiliency agents providing comfort and constancy for children who are exposed to high levels of fear and uncertainty.

The study was conducted by Denver University. The ASPCA has recently awarded a grant to Denver University to continue and expand this research.

-- McDonald, S.E., Collins, E.A., Nicotera, N., Hageman, T.O., Ascione, F.R., Williams, J.H., et al. (2015). **Children's experiences of companion animal maltreatment in households characterized by intimate partner violence.** *Child Abuse & Neglect* (2015). <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2015.10.005>

## ***THE LINK AND... CRIMINAL JUSTICE***

### **New Jersey Outlaws Animal Sexual Abuse**

New Jersey became the 38<sup>th</sup> state to criminalize bestiality, or animal sexual abuse, on Nov. 9 when Gov. Chris Christie returned from his Presidential campaign trail to sign into law **A. 3012**. This measure amends the state's existing animal cruelty statute, R.S.4:22-17, to specifically make it a crime to use, or cause or procure the use of, an animal in any kind of sexual manner or initiate any kind of sexual contact with the animal, including, but not limited to, sodomizing the animal. The law does not include provisions to have those convicted placed on sex offenders' registries, as has been ordered in 23 states.



**Gov. Chris Christie**

Bestiality in New Jersey now becomes a crime of the fourth degree, punishable by up to 18 months' imprisonment and/or a \$10,000 fine. If the animal dies or suffers serious bodily injury, or if the person has a prior conviction for animal cruelty, bestiality is a crime of the third degree punishable by up to three to five years' imprisonment and/or a fine of \$15,000.

Of the 37 other states that prohibit sexual abuse of animals, 21 states consider it a felony, including Georgia, North Carolina, Virginia, Mississippi and South Carolina. Bestiality remains legal in the District of Columbia, Hawaii, Kentucky, Nevada, New Mexico, Texas, Vermont, West Virginia and Wyoming. Similar bills are pending in Ohio and New Hampshire.

The New Jersey bill was introduced after a judge dismissed charges against a Moorestown police officer, Robert Melia Jr., who was accused of engaging in a sexual act with calves in 2006. Melia and his girlfriend were later convicted of sexually assaulting minors.

## Link Cited in Baltimore Ban on Dogfighting Paraphernalia

Calling dogfighting a “vile practice” that is “not only cruel to animals, but is associated with other illegal and often violent activity,” Baltimore Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake has proposed a municipal ordinance that would prohibit the possession of dogfighting equipment, such as breaking sticks, treadmills and breeding stands. The Baltimore City Council unanimously approved her proposal on Nov. 16, [The Baltimore Sun](#) reported.



The new measure will help police and animal control officers to file charges. By criminalizing the possession of paraphernalia, authorities can charge those involved in the crime even if no animals are present at the site, the mayor noted. Penalties for paraphernalia possession range as high as a \$1,000 fine and 90 days in jail.

The ASPCA hailed the measure as a critical tool for law enforcement to crack down on the blood sport. The National Link Coalition’s Dr. Randy Lockwood testified before the Baltimore City Council in support of the ban.



## Animal Sexual Abuse Bill Gets Hearing in Ohio

Ohio’s **SB 195**, which would prohibit people from engaging in sexual relations with animals or providing animals for others' sexual conduct, attracted an enthusiastic corps of supporters in November when attorneys, law enforcement and animal welfare authorities testified at a Senate Criminal Justice Committee hearing.

“With more states joining in passing laws prohibiting sexual abuse of animals, zoophiles will seek places where they can engage in this conduct without repercussion,” Jeremy Hoffman, a detective at the Fairfax County (Va.) Police Department, told the committee. “I am most certain that the people of Ohio do not want their state to become the preferred place for animal sex offenders to live.”

Hoffman told lawmakers that he has made 20 bestiality arrests in Virginia since 2011. Several offenders had abused children or committed sex offenses against adults, the [Hudson Hub-Times](#) reported. “Much like those in our society who choose to abuse children, those who sexually abuse animals lack any semblance of a moral compass,” he said. “They lack any sense of sexual boundaries.”

“The current law is wholly inadequate to address this growing threat,” said Sandra Horvath, chair of the Ohio Bar Association’s Animal Law Committee. “Ohio has no bestiality laws aside from a minuscule mention under the definition of ‘obscene.’ This leaves courts unable to effectively punish sexual abuse to animals where there is no ‘apparent’ injury.”

Vicki Deisner, Midwest Legislative Director for the ASPCA, agreed. “Bestiality is, at its core, an antisocial psychological problem, and it is a form of animal abuse regardless of the human perpetrators’ beliefs or intentions, she said. “Bestiality is more than a cultural taboo -- it is a serious offense that exploits the animals physically and psychologically, often times killing them, and is closely tied to violence and sexual abuse toward humans.”

Ohio’s Legislative Service Commission determined that sexual abuse of animals falls outside of existing animal cruelty laws. The new bill would address this loophole and provide for criminal charges against

perpetrators, the seizure of abused animals, and court-ordered psychological evaluations and counseling for offenders.

## ***BUILDING AWARENESS ABOUT THE LINK***

### **Social Workers and Veterinarians Learn About The Link**



Maya Gupta (left) and Jenny Edwards were the presenters at a unique two-day training workshop on The Link between Human and Animal Violence at the University of Tennessee in Knoxville. They covered: the clinical manifestations of animal abuse; bestiality; animal abuse assessments and interventions; using those assessments to inform treatment strategy; and problem-solving, behavior management and empathy-building techniques.

The workshop followed a joint Veterinary Social Work and Veterinary Wellness Summit. Convened by the University of Tennessee Colleges of Veterinary Medicine and Social Work, and the American Association of Veterinary Medical Colleges, the Summit addressed mental health issues and social work's role in the veterinary workplace. National Link Coalition Coordinator Phil Arkow also presented a Link workshop at the Summit. The [Veterinary Social Work](#) movement is built upon a foundation of four pillars: pet loss and grief, compassion fatigue, animal-assisted interventions, and The Link.



## ***THE LINK IN THE LITERATURE***

### **Animal Cruelty: More than a Moral Concern**

Developments in the field of psychology indicate unmistakable connections between child abuse, animal abuse and the eventual escalation of violence by those abusers. However, despite legislative progress in child protection services, outdated laws concerning animal cruelty and confidentiality restrictions in juvenile proceedings hinder the prosecution of juvenile animal abusers. The rehabilitative goals of juvenile adjudication are a strong foundation that can work in tandem with stronger animal protection laws for earlier recognition of dangerous juveniles. Noting that Link research developments indicate the prevention of violence against animals goes beyond moral obligations and deterring socially unacceptable behavior, this paper emphasizes the need for humans to protect animals in order to better protect themselves. It explores flaws in Kentucky's animal cruelty enforcement and juvenile justice systems and proposes methods to resolve or mitigate these gaps.

-- **McHendrix, M. (2010). The kids aren't alright: A critique of animal cruelty statutes and the juvenile justice system in Kentucky. *Journal of Animal & Environmental Law*, 1(2), 290-329.**

## **HELP AVAILABLE: Students Seek Link Internships**

Two students have recently approached the National Link Coalition seeking internship positions. We're not able to accommodate them at this time, but we thought we'd share their stories with our readers in hopes that someone out there may be able to tap into their passion and energy:

### **CLAIR WARDWELL, University of Minnesota**

"I am a Masters of Social Work student at the University of Minnesota. I would like to dedicate my career to studying, spreading awareness of, doing prevention for the link between animal abuse and other forms of abuse toward humans. I need to complete two field internships and I was wondering if you know of an organization I could work with over this coming summer, or if there is an internship through your organization?"



"My dream would be to learn more about this and get involved in trying to change policy to reflect the link (i.e. if someone abuses animals it could potentially have consequences regarding their contact with children). I live in Minnesota, so finding an internship here where I could work with an organization doing this work would be ideal, but I think my program would be flexible if I found something elsewhere for the summer.

"Thank you for any direction you can provide."

Clair Wardwell

[cshackel@umn.edu](mailto:cshackel@umn.edu)

### **ANTHROZOOLOGY STUDENT, Canisius College**

Maya Gupta, Executive Director of the Animals and Society Institute and a member of the National Link Coalition steering committee, relates the following to us:



"One of my students from the Canisius College master's program in Anthrozoology called me today, frustrated because she wants to do a service learning experience (either locally or remotely) with an agency working on the Link, specifically as it pertains to domestic violence and animals.

"Despite some promising initial conversations with the director of the Family Justice Center in Buffalo, their internship coordinator doesn't seem interested in the topic and told the student that the clients they serve don't seem to have much need for assistance with their animals. (Bet they aren't asking at intake, huh?) Anyway, if you know anyone who could use her, she's very keen to learn and get experience, and her service learning project can be very flexible in terms of structure, number of hours, distance service, etc. depending on the needs of the agency. She has an especial interest in outreach to victims to make sure they're aware of available services, and outreach on the Link in general to stakeholder agencies and professions."

Maya Gupta

[mayacarless@gmail.com](mailto:mayacarless@gmail.com)

## ***NEWS from LOCAL LINK COALITIONS*** **National Link Coalition Collaborates with Institute on Violence, Abuse and Trauma**



The National Link Coalition has entered into a collaborative agreement with the [Institute on Violence, Abuse and Trauma](#) (IVAT) as part of a combined effort to make a lasting and positive impact in bridging the gaps that often separate violence-prevention professions and to improve current local and national systems of care.

Based at Alliant University in San Diego, IVAT is an international resource and training center that works through networking and collaborations, research, trainings, program assistance and evaluation, and consulting to promote violence-free living. IVAT was created in 2005 when the nationally acclaimed Family Violence and Sexual Assault Institute, founded in 1974 by Robert Geffner, joined Alliant International University.

IVAT conducts regular international summits and training programs, and is involved with such programs as CAST (Child Advocacy Studies Training), risk assessments of sexually-abusive behaviors, and curricula for multi-disciplinary responses to child abuse victims with disabilities. It offers specialty certifications in such areas as child custody evaluations, domestic violence offender treatment, and trauma care. IVAT edits five peer-reviewed scholarly journals in the fields of child and adolescent trauma, child sexual abuse, aggression, family violence, and child custody.

## **Swedish Link Coalition is Getting the Word Out**

[Se Sambandet](#), our Link affiliate in Sweden, is undertaking a campaign to alert veterinarians in that country about The Link. Inspired by a similar poster in Scotland, Carin Holmberg and Nathalie Norden have been distributing dramatic posters at veterinary conferences. The posters ask, “Are You and Your Dog (or Cat) Afraid at Home?” The posters provide information about the Link between animal abuse and domestic violence and a national help line for abused women.

**Är både du och din hund rädda hemma?**

Våld i hemmet drabbar ofta flera i familjen. Om du är utsatt för hot eller våld kan du ringa Kvinnofridslinjen, en nationell stödtelefon för våldsutsatta, på 020-50 50 50 eller gå in på [www.kvinnofridslinjen.se](http://www.kvinnofridslinjen.se)

Forskning visar att det finns samband mellan våld mot djur och våld mot människor. Så blir ett djur slaget kan även andra familjemedlemmar vara i riskzonen.

Läs mer på [www.se sambandet.se](http://www.se sambandet.se)

Se Sambandet 020-505050 Kvinnofridslinjen

**Är både du och din katt rädda hemma?**

Våld i hemmet drabbar ofta flera i familjen. Om du är utsatt för hot eller våld kan du ringa Kvinnofridslinjen, en nationell stödtelefon för våldsutsatta, på 020-50 50 50 eller gå in på [www.kvinnofridslinjen.se](http://www.kvinnofridslinjen.se)

Forskning visar att det finns samband mellan våld mot djur och våld mot människor. Så blir ett djur slaget kan även andra familjemedlemmar vara i riskzonen.

Läs mer på [www.se sambandet.se](http://www.se sambandet.se)

Se Sambandet 020-505050 Kvinnofridslinjen

## Alberta Link Coalition Wins Award

The Alberta Alliance for the Safety of Animals and People (AASAP) has been named the 2015 winner of the Urban Animal Program's [Summit Award for Collaborators of the Year](#). The Urban Animal Summit awards since 2006 have annually recognized the efforts of two or more Canadian organizations that work collaboratively to create a healthier environment for urban animals. The Urban Animal Program illuminates successful strategies for urban animals and provides recognition for those who lead.



AASAP is a coalition of animal and human services agencies helping people escape domestic violence by providing care for their animals. The Alberta SPCA led the formation of AASAP and helped develop the process to admit animals to the Pet Safekeeping Program, keeping confidentiality and safety in the forefront. Edmonton's WIN House is a founding member of AASAP and participated in the development of the referral process. They regularly refer clients to AASAP, Alberta SPCA Education Director Tim Battle tells the LINK-Letter.

Many other individuals and organizations are working together to achieve safety for people and animals fleeing domestic violence in Alberta, Battle says. The Red Deer & District SPCA and Calgary Humane Society have been running similar programs for many years and have been crucial in assisting AASAP in the development of the Pet Safekeeping Program. Agencies within the AASAP coalition that have been integral to the success of the Pet Safekeeping Program include the Alberta Veterinary Medical Association, Edmonton Humane Society, Centre for Public Legal Education Alberta, Edmonton Police Service, Strathcona Shelter Society Ltd. "A Safe Place", and Alberta Association of Animal Health Technologists.



"While any award is worth celebrating, what makes this so special is that it recognizes the work and dedication of all the AASAP partners whose cooperation has allowed this program to be successful," says Battle.

## San Bernardino Coalition Conducts Link Trainings

Despite the tragic massacre unfolding only a few miles away that left 14 people dead and 21 injured, the San Bernardino County District Attorney's [Animal Cruelty Task Force](#) conducted its 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Conference in early December. Speakers included the National Link Coalition's Phil Arkow speaking about the cruelty connection; the Humane Society of the United States' Eric Sakach discussing dogfighting; the Animal Legal Defense Fund's Lora Dunn offering tips on bringing successful cases to court; and spcaLA's Madeline Bernstein presenting on animal hoarding.

**A City of Commerce, Calif. animal control officer says hello to "Dozer" and "Lupe," two badged members of the San Bernardino County Victim Services' Special Victims K-9 Unit. The program is funded by unclaimed victim restitution funds. The dogs were trained by Assistance Dogs of the West.**





## South Florida Link Coalition Organized

A new Link coalition has been formed along the Treasure Coast of the Sunshine State. The South Florida Link Coalition has obtained fiscal sponsorship to apply for grants while in the process of applying for 501c3 nonprofit status, according to organizer [Amber Ahern](#). The group has already created a logo, launched a website and [Facebook](#) page, and raised more than \$1,100 through an [online crowdfunding campaign](#).

**Amber Ahern displays the Coalition logo**

The Coalition aims to fight animal cruelty and community, domestic, and sexual violence by focusing on the obvious but often ignored relationships among them. It will provide training and tools for state legislators, law enforcement agencies, humane societies, child protection and human service agencies to participate in multidisciplinary teams and new cross-reporting methods that link the problems and fight back.

The Coalition's work "will help families stuck in bad situations and save the lives of many domestic animals. This is a research-backed way to predict and prevent animal cruelty and abuse," says Ahern.

Eventual goals include changing laws, acting as south Florida's designated training and resource center on The Link between animal cruelty and human violence, opening pet-friendly domestic violence shelters, and providing animal-assisted therapy and humane education to help break the cycles of learned violence.

The Coalition, in conjunction with the Pegasus Foundation and the Spay/Neuter Alliance of the Treasure Coast, brought National Link Coalition coordinator Phil Arkow to South Florida for workshops on Dec. 1 and 2 in West Palm Beach and Port St. Lucie. The presentations attracted a multidisciplinary mix of 85 professionals and members of the public all concerned with reducing violence against communities' most vulnerable residents.



**15<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit State Attorney Dave Aronberg motivated the audience in Port St. Lucie**



Response to the conference has been "enormous," says Ahern. "I have had phone call after phone call from people wanting to be involved. Two police chiefs and one of our county commissioners called me and want to meet after the holidays to discuss how they can help!"

**Key organizers at the Port St. Lucie training program gathered to celebrate the enthusiastic response to the new Link effort in South Florida.**

## ***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 172 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 24 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. The bill was held over in the House Judiciary Committee when the Legislature adjourned and will be revisited in January 2016.



**California AB 494 was signed into law on Oct. 1.** It amends Sec. 527.6 of the Code of Civil Procedure and Secs. 213.5 and 15657.03 of the Welfare and Institutions Code to allow courts to issue restraining orders of protective orders to enjoin a person from harming, threatening or disposing of an animal and to grant a petitioner's request for the exclusive care, possession or control of an animal. Similar provisions currently exist in Sec. 6320 of the California Family Code.



**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** would allow courts to issue protection-from-abuse orders preventing respondents from injuring, torturing, neglecting, threatening, or removing the petitioner's animals. It would apply 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 passed the full House on Oct. 15 by a vote of 96-9 and was sent to the Senate Judiciary Committee.



**New Jersey A 494** would provide specific statutory authority to allow courts to include animals in domestic violence restraining orders. The bill affects animals belonging to either party or a minor child in the household. The bill is in the Assembly Women & Children Committee.



**New Mexico S 178 was approved.** It will appropriate \$50,000 per year over six years) to provide temporary safe havens for the animals of domestic violence survivors.



**Oregon HB 3468 was signed into law on July 21** and will take effect Jan. 1. The new law makes it a Felony C crime of coercion to compel or induce another person to engage in certain conduct by instilling in that person the fear of physical injury being done to an animal.



**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 is in the House Judiciary Committee.



**Wisconsin** companion bills **AB 141** and **SB 97** would add household pets under the provisions of temporary restraining orders or longer-lasting injunctions that can be issued by courts to protect victims of abuse, harassment or threats. The bills would also allow the petitioner or a designee to retrieve household pets. **SB 97** passed the Senate on May 6. **AB 141** was unanimously approved by the Judiciary Committee on Aug. 20 and was sent to the Rules Committee on Sept. 10. The bills will be acted upon in 2016.

### *Therapeutic Interventions for Child Abuse Victims*



**Connecticut HB6725** will cause the Dept. of Children & Families to develop and implement training for employees and mental health care providers on animal-assisted therapy and develop a protocol to use such programs to aid children and youth living with trauma and loss. **The bill passed the House and Senate and signed by Gov. Dannel Malloy on July 6.**



**New Jersey A2155** would establish a three-year pilot program within DCF to provide animal-assisted therapy to victims of childhood violence, trauma, or children with behavioral healthcare needs. The bill is in the Assembly Women & Children Committee.

### *Animal Abuse in the Presence of a Child*



**Illinois HB 3231 was signed into law on Aug. 13** and takes effect on Jan. 1, 2016. The measure, Public Act 099-0367, provides for additional penalties when animal cruelty is committed in front of a child. The law is similar to existing Illinois law providing for increased penalties for domestic violence in the presence of a child: both provisions recognize that such trauma can have long-term negative psychological and health consequences for children, and lead them to becoming abusers themselves.



**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 on March 11 and was referred to the Assembly Agriculture Committee.

### *“CASA for Animals”*

 **Connecticut HB 6187** would establish a process for appointing an advocate to investigate and advocate for the welfare or custody of animals that are subjects of civil or criminal court proceedings. The bill is in the Joint Committee on the Judiciary and had a public hearing on April 1.

 **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 bill is in the Joint Committee on the Judiciary.

 **New York AB 3443** 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 is in the Codes Committee.

 **Rhode Island H 5414** would require a court of competent jurisdiction to order the appointment of an animal advocate where the custody or well-being of an animal is at issue. The House Judiciary Committee recommended that the bill be held for further study.

### *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 in the Agriculture Committee.

 **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 in the Agriculture Committee.

### *Animal Abuse and Other Crimes*

 **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 in the Judiciary Committee. **Senate Bill 219** would prohibit offenders convicted of animal fighting or bestiality from owning animals other than livestock for 5 years. The bill was referred to the Committee of the Whole.



 After languishing for over a year, **New Jersey SB 736 was signed into law on Aug. 10**. The measure creates a new crime of “leader of a dog fighting network” added to the list of offenses considered “racketeering activities” under New Jersey’s anti-racketeering (RICO) law, cleared the Senate on May 18 by a 35-0 vote and the Assembly on June 25 by a 75-0 vote after a series of high-profile dogfighting raids brought the issue’s urgency to lawmakers.

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



**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 in the Agriculture Committee. **S2936** passed the Senate on May 12 and is in 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.



**Vermont S102** was signed into law on June 5 and became effective on July 1. The measure creates an interdisciplinary task force to evaluate the status of animal cruelty investigation and response in Vermont.

### *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. **H132** was referred to the Committee on Children, Families and Persons with Disabilities and **S863** is in the Judiciary Committee



**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.



**Oregon HB 2694** was signed into law on May 28. It allows Department of Human Services regulated social workers to report suspected animal abuse or neglect, with immunity for good-faith reporting. The bill is in the Human Services & Housing 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.



**Rhode Island HR 5194** would initiate a mandatory child abuse/domestic violence and animal abuse cross-reporting system. The bill has been held for further study in the House Judiciary Committee.

### *Animal Hoarding*



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

## *Animal Sexual Abuse*



**New Jersey became the 38<sup>th</sup> state to ban animal sexual abuse** when Gov. Chris Christie signed A3012 into law on Nov. 9. The measure adds bestiality to the existing animal cruelty statute and makes it a crime of the 4<sup>th</sup> degree, or of the 3<sup>rd</sup> degree if the animal dies or suffers serious bodily injury or if the person has a prior conviction for animal cruelty.



**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.



**New Hampshire HB 1547** was pre-filed for consideration in 2016 as Legislative Service Request **LSR 2016-2556**. The measure would establish the crime of bestiality as a Class B felony. 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.



**Oregon HB 2693 was signed into law on June 10.** It creates a new misdemeanor crime of encouraging sexual assault of an animal, defined as possessing or controlling a visual recording of a person engaged in sexual conduct with an animal. The crime is punishable by one year's imprisonment and/or \$6,250 in fines. The new law also increases the penalties for sexual assault of an animal, up to five years' imprisonment and/or \$125,000 fine.

## *THE LINK... IN THE NEWS*



**Robert Lewis Dear**

### **Planned Parenthood Shooting Suspect Had Domestic Violence and Animal Cruelty Charges**

Preliminary media reports indicate that Robert Lewis Dear, 57, charged in the Nov. 27 rampage at a Colorado Springs, Colo., Planned Parenthood clinic that left three people dead and nine others injured, had previously been charged with domestic violence and animal cruelty. [The Denver Post](#) reported that Dear moved to Colorado about a year ago where he led a reclusive existence in a mountain community.

Dear previously had charges filed against him in North and South Carolina where he had had numerous run-ins with the law for misdemeanor charges including domestic violence and being a peeping tom. He was twice acquitted of charges of cruelty to animals in 2002. His ex-wife said that Dear had assaulted her in 1997 but she had declined to press charges. The *New York Times* reported that an online personal ad seeking partners for sadomasochistic sex was possibly posted by Dear. At the time of the shootings, Dear was reportedly living in a dilapidated recreational vehicle with no running water, sewer or electricity with a woman and two German shepherds.



**Douglas Spink**

### **Drug Smuggling Zoophile Re-Arrested in Canada**

An convicted American cocaine smuggler and zoophile said by investigators to have had a lengthy history of sexual fixation on animals, and suspected of stealing a dog in Washington State, was arrested in Port Stanley, Ont., on Nov. 14 for the second time in three months. The [London Free Press](#) reported that it was not known how Douglas Spink, 44, was able to slip back into Canada after having been deported last August.

Spink was arrested by Ontario Provincial police after neighbors told firefighters responding to a house fire about a confrontation outside the house involving Spink holding the homeowner at knifepoint. Four police officers were needed to subdue Spink who fled the scene, broke into another house, and kicked out the windows of a police cruiser. Spink was being held on seven criminal weapons and assault charges.

Spink had been arrested in August for wearing only a towel, behaving strangely and giving police a false name; he was mistakenly released from a detention center but recaptured after authorities found an immigration hold on him on a warrant from Washington State.

Spink is a convicted cocaine smuggler and advocate for sexual relations with animals who once operated a bestiality tourism farm. He was wanted in Washington for skipping out on a 90-day sentence on animal cruelty charges. Investigators speculated that Spink had returned to Canada to retrieve a dog named "Genghis", stolen from Spink's neighbor in Washington in February 2014.



**Bradley Glenn Boley and "Buddy"**

### **Jury Rejects Defendant's Claim that Burned Dog Turned the Flame on Itself**

A man with a history of attempted indecency with a child was sentenced to 15 months in prison for punishing his Chihuahua puppy by putting it in a kennel on the stove, causing burns over 100% of its body. The Dallas County, Texas jury did not buy Bradley Glenn Boley's argument that the pup, named "Buddy," reached through the grate on the kennel and turned the burner on himself.

Boley told police the stove had been broken for 18 months but that he might have jarred it during cleaning to make it operable. He denied turning on the burner but suggested Buddy may have slipped his paw through the cage and turned it on. Boley said he did not smell burning flesh, hair or plastic until a concerned neighbor came by to check on the apartment. Buddy had to be euthanized. \

Prosecutors introduced evidence that Boley is on probation for a drug offense and received deferred adjudication for attempted indecency with a child in the 1980s. The felony sentence was reduced from an original 10-year term because the jury did not believe that the stove was considered a "deadly weapon," the [Dallas Morning News](#) reported.



**Michael J. Bryant**

### **Oregon Rampage Leaves Three People and Two Dogs Dead**

Police in Oregon are attempting to unravel the details of a rampage on Nov. 15 that left three people and two dogs dead. Springfield and Eugene police arrested Michael J. Bryant, 31, of Springfield after a short pursuit and charged him with aggravated and attempted murder, aggravated animal abuse, arson, and eluding police. The [Eugene Register-Guard](#) reported that when officials responded to a reported assault and house fire in Springfield, Elizabeth Bryant, 62, told them that her son had killed his father, set the house on fire, assaulted her, and then took the family's SUV.

Police found the bodies of the father, Jefferson Bryant, 64, and two dead dogs inside. A short time later, Eugene police were dispatched to two different scenes where three pedestrians had been intentionally run over by the same SUV, killing two of them and seriously injuring the third. Police later identified a baseball bat as the murder and assault weapon. Bryant was charged with aggravated murder because he is on probation from assault and criminal mischief charges in 2014.



**Gregory Fagnoli**

### **Strangulation Suspect Charged with Killing Girlfriend's Dog... Because It Kept Him Awake**

Gregory Fagnoli, 26, of Auburn, Mass. was ordered held without bail pending a dangerousness hearing after being accused of beating his girlfriend's dog to death with a broom handle because it was keeping him awake – and because he had also been charged two weeks previously with attempting to strangle his girlfriend. The [Worcester Telegram](#) reported that prosecutors said the dog's teeth had been kicked in and it had puncture wounds on its hind legs. Police also found the dog's hair and blood stuck to Fagnoli's hand, wrist and forearm, according to reports. The girlfriend, Tabitha Taylor, said Fagnoli had tried to choke her and grabbed the phone from her as she was trying to call police. She freed herself by biting him. Police seized a 9mm firearm with the serial number defaced during that investigation. Central District Court Judge David Locke also granted Taylor a one-year restraining order on Fagnoli.

## ***LINK TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES***

**Dec. 17 – Oklahoma City, Okla.:** [The Oklahoma Link Coalition](#) will hold its bi-monthly meeting and Christmas party.

**Jan. 20, 2016 – Pittsfield, Mass.:** The regular meeting of [HAVEN](#) (Human-Animal Violence Education Network) will be held at the Berkshire Humane Society.

**Jan. 27, 2016 – Philadelphia, Pa.:** [Phil Arkow](#) will present on The Link to students at the University of Pennsylvania School of Veterinary Medicine.

**Feb. 3, 2016 – Minneapolis, Minn.:** Randy Lockwood, Rachel Touroo and Nicole Eller-Medina of ASPCA and Diane Balkin of ALDF will be among the presenters at a day-long track on "Animal Cruelty: Training MN Veterinarians To Assist Law Enforcement" at the [Minnesota Veterinary Medical Association](#) conference.

**Feb. 4, 2016 – Minneapolis, Minn.:** Randy Lockwood, Rachel Touroo and Nicole Eller-Medina of ASPCA and Diane Balkin of ALDF will be among the presenters on “Be Ready When Suspected Animal cruelty Walks In the Door” at the [Minnesota Veterinary Medical Association](#) conference.

**Feb. 7, 2016 – Washington, DC:** – The Link will be discussed at the [National Coalition on Violence Against Animals](#)’ 2016 Annual Meeting.

**Feb. 9, 2016 – San Bernardino, Calif.:** Phil Arkow and San Bernardino County Animal Cruelty Task Force representatives will present at the San Bernardino County [Children’s Network](#) training.

**Feb. 21, 2016 – Davis, Calif.:** Phil Arkow will present a lunchtime plenary session on The Link at the UC-Davis School of Veterinary Medicine’s annual [Winter Conference](#).

**Feb. 23, 2016 – Newark, N.J.:** Phil Arkow will train New Jersey Division of Child Protection and Permanency staff on the implications of animal abuse in child welfare through the [Child Welfare Training Partnership](#).

**March 11, 2016 – Orlando, Fla.:** Phil Arkow will discuss how The Link can bring animal control and humane organizations together at the [Florida Animal Control Association](#) conference.

**April 6, 2016 – (online):** Phil Arkow will present a webinar on Interpersonal Violence and Animal Cruelty for the National Organization for Victim Assistance’s [Victim Assistance Academy](#).

**May 6, 2016 – Manahawkin, N.J.:** Phil Arkow will train New Jersey Division of Child Protection and Permanency staff on the implications of animal abuse in child welfare through the [Child Welfare Training Partnership](#).

**May 11-13, 2016 – St. Petersburg Beach, Fla.:** Several Link programs will be offered at the 9<sup>th</sup> Annual [Veterinary Forensic Sciences conference](#).

**May 16, 2016 – New Brunswick, N.J.:** Phil Arkow will train New Jersey Division of Child Protection and Permanency staff on the implications of animal abuse in child welfare through the [Child Welfare Training Partnership](#).

**July 11-13, 2016 – 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.

**Nov. 4, 2016 -- Phoenix, Md.:** Nancy Blaney will present at the Baltimore County State’s Attorney’s Office Animal Abuse Unit [Animal Abuse Leadership Summit](#).

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)) 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.

### Members of the National Link Coalition Steering Committee

#### Phil Arkow, Coordinator

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

#### Lesley Ashworth

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

#### Diane Balkin, J.D.

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

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

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

#### Maya Gupta, Ph.D.

Executive Director,  
Animals and Society Institute  
Atlanta, Ga.

#### Jane A. Hunt

Coordinator, Community Health Improvement Plan  
Larimer County Department of Health  
Ft. Collins, Colo.

#### Mark Kumpf, CAWA

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

#### Randall Lockwood, Ph.D.

Senior Vice Pres., Forensic Sciences & Anti-Cruelty Projects,  
ASPCA  
Falls Church, Va.

#### Natalie Martinez

Programs Manager  
National Coalition Against Domestic Violence  
Denver, Colo.

#### Paul Needham

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

#### Maria Luisa O'Neill

Bilingual Domestic Violence Expert, Trainer and Consultant  
Denver, Colo.

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

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

#### Eve Pearl

Executive Director, Council on Child Abuse of Southern Ohio  
Cincinnati, Ohio

#### Allie Phillips, J.D.

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

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

Associate Professor/Animal-Human Interactions Coordinator  
Arizona State University School of Social Work  
Phoenix, Ariz.

#### Michele Robinson

Program Manager, Family Violence & Domestic Relations  
National Council of Juvenile & Family Court Judges  
Reno, Nev.

#### Hugh Tebault III

President,  
The Latham Foundation  
Alameda, Calif.

#### John Thompson

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