

# NEW ENGLAND NEWS

The New England Federation of Humane Societies Newsletter October 2004



## WESTBOROUGH WELCOMES WELFARE WORKERS

Massachusetts was host to the 59<sup>th</sup> Annual NEFHS Training Conference held in April, where over 200 attendees found themselves learning and relaxing in the spacious and comfortable Wyndham Westborough Hotel and Conference Center.

Every year the conference provides animal welfare workers and animal control officers from throughout New England with an opportunity to share ideas and refuel themselves, and this year was no different. Many thanks go out to our sponsors and vendors, who allow us to put on a top-notch conference with national speakers year after year. This year's sponsors included PETCO (our "top dog"), PETSMART, Hill's Science Diet and The ASPCA ("cat's meow"), American Humane, The HSUS and Petfinder.com ("tail wagers"), Animal Rescue League of Boston and The Pet Savers Foundation ("feathered friends"), and Massachusetts Animal Coalition, Animal Care Equipment Services and Especially for Pets ("little chirpers").

After the annual business meeting, keynote speaker and former policewoman Kat Albright gave attendees insight into exactly how a woman with vision and tenacity struggles to attain her dreams and goals, no matter what the cost, emotionally or financially. Her true life "tails" took us along on her journey of police cases, to real life search and rescue of people, then eventually to her dream, animal search and rescue. Albrecht reminded us all to "believe in your great ideas, they haunt you."

Monday's highlight was ASPCA Cruelty Investigator and Animal Precinct star Mark McDonald, who retold his interesting experiences in New York City and spoke about officer safety while fighting animal crimes. His first-hand knowledge and superb photo presentation gave audience members an up-close and personal view of what

life is really like for humane investigators. The day's classes ended with four provocative round-table discussions for attendees to participate and share real-life experiences.



Board member Carmine DiCenso "gets down" (literally) at the Disco Party.

Monday night's opening reception and exhibitor's gala, featuring an "Animals in Art" exhibit, gave display to both amateur and professional pieces of artwork and photographs, while attendees gathered for cocktails and snacks. The night's end was a somber glimpse into the horrific world of factory farming. The Farm Sanctuary documentary, *Peaceable Kingdom*, filmed by Tribe of Heart, is a disturbing and authentic video showcasing the graphic life inside slaughterhouses. There wasn't a dry eye for those brave enough to stay and watch this telling and powerful video.

Tuesday hosted a full schedule of workshops. Connie Howard, a Federation favorite, addressed Canine Aggression and Community Outreach. Her innovative and progressive ideas were well-received. An afternoon press conference for the HSUS Safe Cats campaign featured a panel of experts to discuss the dangers of allowing cats outdoors, and featured a visit from the Worcester Ice Cats' hockey team mascot, Scratch. The night ended with a disco dance party with dessert for a little unwinding and lots of boogying.

Wednesday morning offered three sessions for attendees, followed by brunch and the closing program, *Shaping Public Policies to Protect Animals*. The HSUS's Nancy Perry presented the how-to's of legislation and the necessity of getting involved politically. She demonstrated how to use the media in effective ways to be a voice for the animals, to offer empowerment as a social movement, and to create track records for future animal friendly laws.

Federation business ended with the appointment of the new NEFHS President, Angela Nickerson. Welcome Angela! Thanks and appreciation go to our outgoing president, Anne Lindsay, for her hard work and dedication. We are glad you will remain on the Board of Directors!

Thanks to all who participated in this 2004 Annual Conference. See you next year in Portland, ME . . . April 25-27, 2005!

### 2004 Scholarship Recipients

Once again, the NEFHS awarded scholarship money to attendees from throughout New England. For more information about scholarship opportunities for next year's conference, go to

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



**THE NEW ENGLAND FEDERATION OF HUMANE SOCIETIES**

*provides education, training, information, and networking opportunities  
to support animal protection organizations' missions  
toward creating a more humane world.*

On March 5<sup>th</sup> 2004, Quinnipiac University in Hamden, CT was the backdrop for a controversial yet eye-opening NEFHS “town meeting” on the policies and ethics surrounding distant animal relocation programs. The NEFHS does not hold an opinion on animal relocation, but reasons are acutely understandable for such a challenging debate.

Five keynote speakers addressed more than 100 attendees, who were also given armloads of written materials on the topic from a variety of sources. The panelists included Perry Fina (North Shore Animal League), Marlene Walsh (PETsMART Charities), Lisa Chassey D.V.M. (Emory Animal Hospital, Powell, TN), Lorna Grande, DVM (University of Massachusetts Veterinary and Sciences Department), and Frank Ribaudo (CT Department of Agriculture’s Animal Population Control Program (APCP)).

Where do we start? The event certainly brought up more questions than answers. Some organizations have engaged in relocation for years or just a few months, some were curious to find out more, while others outright reject such programs. Why animal relocation to New England? Because we have no more “warm and fuzzy” pooches in our shelters? Do they have questionable temperaments? Can we justifiably proclaim there is demand for small dogs and puppies in New England, and can the “shortage” only be fulfilled by importing animals from distant shelters? Are we driven by profit and a retail influence, or an emotional response to animals dying down south? Aren’t animals also dying here in New England?

After introductions, panelists were asked to give a quick synopsis of their own experiences. North Shore’s Perry Fina said, “If the animals aren’t available, then the traffic flow is reduced and thus the potential adopters will become buyers in a pet store market. This perpetuates the horror of puppy mills. Our methodology is to provide puppies, dogs, cats and kittens that otherwise would be euthanized.”

He also claimed that North Shore’s adult dog adoptions increase with the use of basic marketing techniques, mixed with the flow of “puppy” traffic. NSAL claims to be the largest humane organization doing transports. They have concerns of oversight and Fina wants to make sure it is “done properly, safely and non-exploitably.”

Marlene Walsh talked about PETsMART Charities and grant monies that helped initiate transport vans. She said their first official transport was enacted in March. Walsh remarked, “This is a country-wide epidemic—every state is conducting some type of state-to-state animal relocation.” She described her participation in ride-alongs to personally view working procedures. She lamented for the dedicated people who want to make a difference in the lives of both animals and people.



Walsh’s commentary did allude to a few occasions where individuals might have been slightly misguided, but the overall conclusion she saw was the need to lessen useless euthanasia. Her agency wants to see “source shelters” enact educational protocol for “a community that casts off so many animals.” PETsMART is looking to release some of the pressure from the “source shelters” and assist in systematic changes in education and community awareness. They offer a “thorough and complete program.”

Dr. Lisa Chassey, DVM, spoke of her time in Knoxville, TN and Champagne, IL. She sympathized that southern shelters and the spay/neuter movement there lags behind a good 20 to 30 years. She reminded us that southern states have weather which allows year-round reproduction, and also of a human population growth rate that is higher. Her Tennessee statistics show that in 11 counties the average animal intake for 1 year was 58,645 animals with the euthanasia rate of 41,576. The human population for those counties was 1,894,779.

“The unadoptables are not presented as needy rehommables, but there are hundreds and thousands of adoptable, rehommable animals in the south,” said Chassey. “What brings people to shelters faster? Puppies!” she firmly announced. “Communities need shelters even if homelessness is a thing of the past. Is there a greater sense of purpose when one helps another community? If it is a market then why don’t we become a positive part of it?” Chassey left the audience to ponder.

Dr. Lorna Grande saw animal transportation/relocation as an important topic. From a veterinary medicine/disease prevention point of view, and with her over thirty years experience in shelter medicine, she has seen her share of medical travesties. She informed attendees of the old stand-by diseases and their transmission in general, random-source dogs. “These are the strays of the strays coming together in a transport vehicle going a long distance. What age is immune competent? Vaccines do not protect an animal from diseases. The animal’s body mounts an immune response and the immune system protects the body from disease—not the vaccine.” Grande further educated the listeners, “When stressed, the cortisol steroids are enhanced. You

can’t fight off the disease even if you’re vaccinated. Whether you have a heart of gold or stone you still are witness to a puppy getting stressed or sick.” Grande also stated “sometimes we lose perspective.”

Frank Ribaudo explained that the Connecticut APCP has been operational for 9 years, with two suspensions due to lack of funding. He feels the stress of out-of-state animals will financially burden the program, once again bankrupting it, possibly forever. “Our allegiance is set up for dog pounds and statutory definition,” he said. Ribaudo vocalized that since 1995, over 40 thousand animals have gone through the program, with a payout to participating veterinary practices of over \$489,000.

Panelists were inundated with probing inquiries from a very eager audience. “Is it about making a global difference or an individual one?” an unknown audience member cast into the crowd of listeners. “What’s the difficulty in helping out other states?” another probed. “How can we guarantee we are not encouraging bad behavior from southern shelters?” inquired another. “What is the comparison to pet store purchases? Are we that far off from the Midwestern puppy mills?” one attendee chimed in over the crowd.

Questions were raised about how to engage in municipal-to-municipal transports and whether this would make dogs not disposable—or would it essentially be moving problem dogs from one town to another? “What about regulation questions and are groups certified, and if so, are there any state or federal regulations for this?” another asked.

“Isn’t importing good adoptables ‘skimming cream off’ and leaving bad dogs for the shelters—and will southern folks go there to adopt if all the good dogs are gone?” a demanding attendee wanted to know. No answer was offered.

What can be said to give an overall view of animal transports? Are they good or bad, right or wrong, ethical or inhumane, legal or illegal? We know that there are challenges, that is what this forum is about...but where do we go from here? Is it a quick fix or a long-term commitment to teach and educate? Can we objectively gather a panoramic view from inside our self-contained shelter and rescue walls?

The debate continues with vigor even as the outlook is hazy. No one can deny that good dogs are dying everywhere. The pink elephant is standing right in our own “real life animal shelter living room”... now what do we do?



# A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

*By Angela Nickerson*

For most people in animal welfare, summer "vacation" is what other people have. For the rest of us, it is the busiest time of the year. In addition to the

great suggestions, insightful comments, and some critiques. We do our best to take all of this information and mold it into a format for programs, activities, and direction for the upcoming year. We delegate the time to do this because the membership of this organization drives the Board itself and the direction that we go in.

ing an internal structure that will hopefully make our Board more effective.

normal craziness of summer, the NEFHS Board has been busy working on Fed business. This year, we started in mid-June with a two-day facilitated retreat. It was time to take a look at where we are, where we're going, and how we will get there. We determined that some things worked and some things had lost their usefulness. This was a great jumping off point for us and set the tone for the work we will be doing over the next year and beyond.

As the membership evolves and its needs change, so must we, and we have some changes in store for the upcoming year. We have reorganized some of our standing committees to be more streamlined and focus on where the energy and needs are. For example, our Mobile Workshop Committee that offered on-site training in a variety of topics, but was infrequently used, has been rolled into an Outreach Committee. This committee will concentrate on bringing the latest, cutting-edge information and training to our membership in a readily accessible and exciting format. We have also established a Governance Committee that is responsible for developing and implement-

Even our annual Conference will look a little different this year, with more interactive workshops. Some will be presented in a Dialogue Education style, which is a hands-on teaching method that emphasizes "doing", not just listening. We are also looking at expanding and modifying some of our networking opportunities to be more inclusive and easier for everyone to take part in.

As in past years, one of the first things we do is read through all of the evaluations and comments that we have gathered from all of you, the membership. It is always a mixed bag, with a lot of

We are excited about the direction the Fed is going in and hope that all of our members will feel more involved and have a stronger sense of "membership" as opposed to simply being an attendee at a conference.

Your thoughts, comments and suggestions aren't just welcome, they are imperative to helping the Board do its job well! You can send email to the website or contact me directly at [ajngooddog@aol.com](mailto:ajngooddog@aol.com). We'd love to hear from you!

## Directors

## BOARD ROSTER

## Advisors

### Angela Nickerson, President

Good Dog Training & Behavior  
11 Elm Ct.  
Maynard, MA 01754  
(978) 461-1753  
[AJNGooddog@aol.com](mailto:AJNGooddog@aol.com)

### Lisa Lafontaine, 1st VP

Monadnock Humane Society  
Rte 10, Box 678  
W. Swanzey, NH 03469  
603-352-9011 x 111  
[lisal@humanecommunity.org](mailto:lisal@humanecommunity.org)

### Sandy Monterose, 2nd. VP

ASPCA  
PO Box 101  
Oakville, CT 06779  
(860) 274-4825  
[sandym@aspca.org](mailto:sandym@aspca.org)

### Leslie Harris, Secretary

Dakin Animal Shelter  
163 Montague Rd.  
Leverett, MA 01054  
413-548-9898 x 2  
[leslie@dakinshelter.org](mailto:leslie@dakinshelter.org)

### Steve Jacobsen, Treasurer

Animal Welfare Society  
PO Box 43  
W. Kennebunk, ME 04094  
(207) 985-3244  
[awsedr@animalwelfaresociety.org](mailto:awsedr@animalwelfaresociety.org)

### Ray Connors

CT Department of Agriculture  
67 Christian Rd.  
Middlebury, CT 06762  
(860) 713-2525  
[rconnors3304@charter.net](mailto:rconnors3304@charter.net)

### Carmine DiCenso

MSPCA  
350 So. Huntington Ave.  
Boston, MA 02130  
617-541-5025  
[Cdicenso@mspca.org](mailto:Cdicenso@mspca.org)

### Cheryl Ann Fernandes

CT Humane Society  
455 Post Rd. East  
Westport, CT 06880  
203-227-4137  
[cfernandes@cthumane.org](mailto:cfernandes@cthumane.org)

### Stephanie Frommer

Especially for Pets  
153 Turnpike Rd.  
Westborough, MA 01581  
508-366-9696  
[steph@especiallyforpets.com](mailto:steph@especiallyforpets.com)

### Scott Giacoppo

MSPCA Brockton  
1300 West Elm St. Ext.  
Brockton, MA 02301  
508-580-2847  
[sgiacoppo@mspca.org](mailto:sgiacoppo@mspca.org)

### Anne Lindsay

Northeast Animal Shelter  
242 W. Main St.  
Westborough, MA 01581  
508-366-6669  
[alind37147@aol.com](mailto:alind37147@aol.com)

### Zita Macinanti

MSPCA Law Enforcement  
350 So. Huntington Ave.  
Boston, MA 02130  
(617) 522-6008  
[Zm1126@comcast.net](mailto:Zm1126@comcast.net)

### Allison Allen

ASPCA  
35 Harbor View Ave.  
Norwalk, CT 06854  
212-876-7700 x 4446  
[allisona@aspca.org](mailto:allisona@aspca.org)

### Joanne Bourbeau

HSUS New England Regional Office  
PO Box 619  
Jacksonville, VT 05342  
(802) 368-2790  
[jbourbeau@hsus.org](mailto:jbourbeau@hsus.org)

### Wanda Burnham

Camden Rockport ARL  
PO Box 707  
Rockport, ME 04856  
207-236-8702  
[littlewoman0063@yahoo.com](mailto:littlewoman0063@yahoo.com)

### Lisa Cushing

NAHEE  
67 Norwich Essex Tpk  
Ea. Haddam, CT 06423-1736  
860-434-8666 x 32  
[cushing@nahee.org](mailto:cushing@nahee.org)

### Lynn DellaBianca

Stamford Animal Control  
201 Magee Ave  
Stamford, CT 06902-5927  
203-977-4437  
[ldellabianca@ci.stamford.ct.us](mailto:ldellabianca@ci.stamford.ct.us)

### John Denardo

MSPCA  
350 So. Huntington Ave.  
Boston, MA 02130  
617-541-5076  
[jdenardo@mspca.org](mailto:jdenardo@mspca.org)

### Sue DiMeo

PAWS of Wakefield  
PO Box 1842  
Wakefield, MA 01880  
781-246-6111  
[sdimeo@comcast.net](mailto:sdimeo@comcast.net)

### Dave Holden

RISPCA  
186 Amaral St.  
Riverside, RI 02915-2223  
401-438-8150  
[davehrispca@aol.com](mailto:davehrispca@aol.com)

### Linda Huebner

HSUS New England Regional Office  
PO Box 619  
Jacksonville, VT 05342  
(802) 368-8702  
[lhuebner@hsus.org](mailto:lhuebner@hsus.org)

### Patricia Liptak

Milford Animal Control  
664 East Broadway  
Milford, CT 06460  
203-783-3279  
[pliptak@ci.milford.ct.us](mailto:pliptak@ci.milford.ct.us)

### Ann Mills

Caledonia Animal Rescue (CARE)  
PO Box 79  
Peacham, VT 05862  
802-592-3265  
[armills@pivot.net](mailto:armills@pivot.net)

### Maureen Prendergast

The Crazy Canine & ARL of NH  
545 Route 101  
Bedford, NH 03110  
603-582-5400  
[shilohjazz@yahoo.com](mailto:shilohjazz@yahoo.com)

## PRINT & VIDEO

**Peaceable Kingdom**, an exciting new documentary from Tribe of Heart, makers of *The Witness*, offers a breakthrough for farm animals and the people working to end their suffering. A story told in the words of those who grew up on farms and those who care daily for rescued farm animals, the film weaves together themes of respect, forgiveness, commitment, healing, and a vision for peace that begins on one's plate. Order on-line at [www.farmsanctuary.org](http://www.farmsanctuary.org) for \$20.

## PROGRAMS

If your agency is involved in animal cruelty investigation or humane law enforcement, you may want to take a few moments to complete a **brief on-line survey being conducted by the ASPCA**. Responses are being used to develop and enhance existing training for those who encounter animals in their roles as members and protectors of the community. Go to [www.aspc.org/site/PageServer?pagename=nsosurvey](http://www.aspc.org/site/PageServer?pagename=nsosurvey).

## TRAINING & EDUCATION

The National Association for Humane and Environmental Education (NAHEE) and Humane Society University (HSU) are proud to offer the **Certified Humane Education Specialist (C.H.E.S.) program**, a new professional development certification program to introduce animal care and control professionals and volunteers to important concepts and trends in humane education. For more information on C.H.E.S., contact Lisa Cushing, NAHEE outreach coordinator, at 860-434-8666.

A new, day-long training seminar available from the ASPCA National Shelter Outreach Department teaches staff how to implement the

**Meet Your Match Canine-ality Adoption Program** ("Meet Your Match"). The program is comprised of the Adopter Survey and the Canine-ality Assessment. Both are scored and color-coded to help shelters direct adopters to dogs most appropriate for their lifestyle. Thanks to the sponsorship of The Iams Company, speakers fees, travel expenses, and all training materials are free. For more information, contact Kelly Cunningham, ASPCA Meet Your Match Program Coordinator, at 212-876-7700 x 4405.

"**Greyhounds in the Classroom**" is a dynamic, free presentation that introduces young people to greyhounds. During this 30-60 minute program from the Grey2K USA Education Fund, humane educator Melissa Feldman tells kids about the history of greyhound dogs, encourages adoption, and brings a live greyhound with her on every visit. She also provides educational materials, including kid-friendly posters and stickers. Contact Melissa at [info@grey2kusaedu.org](mailto:info@grey2kusaedu.org).

**Investigating Animal Cruelty: An Online Course for Humane Investigators**, consists of two 8-week semester courses, covering everything from the handling of complaints to the techniques of investigation to relevant federal law. This is the perfect training opportunity for animal care and control personnel who cannot abandon their normal responsibilities for a week or longer, and whose agencies cannot afford to subsidize travel and hotel expenses. Tuition is \$499. For more information, contact Humane Society University at [hsu@hsus.org](mailto:hsu@hsus.org) or phone 301-548-7731.

Humane Society University (HSU) and Duquesne University's School of Leadership and Profes-

sional Advancement (SLPA) have developed an on-line **Bachelor of Science degree in Humane Leadership**. This entirely on-line program and fully-accredited degree is intended to provide targeted, specific knowledge that will support careers in animal advocacy and shelter management. For more information visit [www.hsus.org/DU](http://www.hsus.org/DU) or call 301-258-3004.

## NEWS

The HSUS and the Fund for Animals released their "**Mid-Term Report on the 108th Congress**," providing a detailed picture of animal protection issues that emerged in Congress last year. Congress made progress on a number of fronts, enacting the Captive Wildlife Safety Act and providing meaningful funding for animal welfare programs. It left several important measures unresolved, however, including those to increase penalties for animal fighting and to ban the slaughter of horses for human consumption. The full text of the national scorecard is available at [www.hsus.org/legislation](http://www.hsus.org/legislation).

Currently, more than two million dogs and cats have an implanted microchip that is intended to increase their chances of being identified. Unfortunately, competing companies today supply chips with different frequencies that are not detected by all scanners. The recently formed **Coalition for Reuniting Pets and Families** is asking that microchip and scanner manufacturers and marketers permit the use of a scanner that can read all microchips, and that such a scanner be made readily available to shelters, animal control officers and veterinarians throughout the country. For more information, visit [www.readallchips.com](http://www.readallchips.com).

## Maine Federation Connects Sheltering Community

The networking efforts of the NEFHS are mirrored throughout the year by smaller umbrella groups that work at a local or state level. In this issue of *New England News*, we profile the Maine Federation of Humane Societies. Founded in 1953, the MFHS includes shelters and humane societies, large and small, urban and rural, located throughout Maine.

In addition to providing training and networking opportunities, the MFHS promotes animal-friendly legislation and is also developing a web site and participates in MaineShare, a network of nonprofit organizations that generates funding for its members through workplace giving.

The current MFHS president is Martha Kalina, executive director of the Humane Society of Knox County. She had this to say about her work with this organization:

### How did you get involved in the Maine Federation of Humane Societies?

*I am a huge advocate of networking and not re-inventing the wheel, and MFHS seemed like the perfect opportunity to see how other facilities operate. But when I join something, I can't seem to sit quietly in the background — when I'm in, I'm ALL in.*

### What do you see as the primary purpose of the Maine Fed?

*Networking. There is no need to feel alone in the animal welfare world and no need to go-it-alone. I think each facility has something to bring to the table to help make other facilities more efficient and productive — just plain better.*

### What has been the federation's biggest success in the past year? Biggest challenge?

*I think our biggest success has been a program we call "SHELTER SHARE." Rather than Board meetings every month, we moved them to every other month and on the no-meeting months, we move around the state to visit other shelters. The host shelter provides a tour and lunch. Another shelter brings a program to share and lots of time is spent networking. I think it's invaluable to know how others do what they do and to know the other animal welfare workers in the state. Biggest challenge — keeping Board Members interested and active.*

Finding time to devote to state humane federations can be difficult when most members have shelters of their own to support. Martha notes that New England Fed events like their town meetings have been very helpful in airing issues and getting concerns on the table in a larger regional forum.

**Connecticut**

The city of Torrington, CT Emergency Management Agency hosted a day-long "Introduction to Animals in Disasters" workshop in September as part of its effort to train its Community Emergency Response Teams in animal issues. The event was an opportunity to bring together animal control officers, animal shelter workers, veterinarians, emergency response workers, police and fire officials, health officers and animal business owners to discuss the many issues facing animals in the event of disasters. This free event featured presentations on personal planning for pets, live-stock and horses, community planning, and utilizing local, state and federal resources at all levels of planning. Speakers included staff of the HSUS, the Torrington Police Department, the CVMA, the CT Office of Emergency Management, the USDA, and the Veterinary Medical Assistance Team. For more information on Torrington's animal disaster plan, contact Officer Tom Vannini at 860-489-2014 or email [tavannini@hotmail.com](mailto:tavannini@hotmail.com).

**Maine**

Carl Clark of Canaan, ME, was stunned to find his 12-year old Labrador retriever "Bud" wandering blind and disoriented in a local gravel pit on the morning of June 20th. Keith Cordice, the man who has since been charged in this case, allegedly attacked the dog and struck him with a walking stick after the lab wandered onto his property. According to the veterinarian who examined Bud, the dog had a large infection on his neck and a lump over his left eye. In addition, his left retina was detached and his right eyeball was filled with blood. Maine Friends of Animals has called for maximum penalties if Cordice is convicted and is watching this is a test case for Maine's recently enacted aggravated animal cruelty law. However, local papers have reported a Superior Court Justice ruled there was a lack of evidence for the felony animal cruelty charge. Cordice is scheduled to appear again in court in early October and faces jail time for violating his probation.

**Massachusetts**

**IN MEMORIAM.** Animal welfare advocates are mourning the loss of Richard "Dick" Stein, who had worked as the animal control supervisor for the Canton, MA Animal Control Department for 32 years. Dick founded the Animal Control Officers Association of Massachusetts (ACOAM) and the Animal Control Officer Certification Program for Massachusetts. He was named Massachusetts Animal Control Officer of the year in 1995. "Dick was one of the backbones of ACOAM and he will be sorely missed," said Norma Haskins, an animal control officer in Marshfield and one of the three founding members of ACOAM.

**New Hampshire**

Governor Craig Benson established the "Governor's Task Force Regarding the Humane Treatment of Animals" in May in response to several high-profile animal cruelty cases, as well as humane issues raised during a debate on a greyhound protection bill (see the Legislative Update on pg. 6 for more information). The Task Force was created to "evaluate the extent and causes of animal abuse in New Hampshire; perform a thorough analysis of all statutory administrative rules, and State, community and private programs that address animal abuse; and provide recommendations to the Governor on ways to better prevent and address animal abuse in NH." Appointees of the Task Force include a representative of the Police Chiefs Association, the HSUS, Fish & Game Department, New Hampshire Federation of Humane Organizations, UNH Co-Op, NHVMA, Municipal Association, the state veterinarian, a House Representative, State Senator, and four citizens. Check out the state website at [www.nh.gov](http://www.nh.gov) for more information.

**Rhode Island**

The East Providence Animal Shelter came under fire this summer when a baby raccoon who had been illegally housed at the facility for several weeks tested positive for rabies. According to the *Providence Journal*, the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management closed the shelter on July 20th and the state has been holding rabies vaccination clinics for those who were exposed to the rabid animal, a group which includes over fifty volunteers, city workers and family members of employees. The City of East Providence is still considering whether to permanently close its municipal shelter and merge with a neighboring animal control department, privatize the facility, or reorganize its animal operations as a new city department. As a result of the probe into the shelter's operations that was ordered by the city manager, the East Providence animal control officer and four pound keepers have been relieved of duty.

**Vermont**

The Vermont Animal Control Association is a newly formed organization that just received its non-profit status and began meeting in late September. Membership is open to animal control, humane society, police agency, municipal pound, and private animal rescue workers, as well as local and state health department officials. According to their by-laws, their objectives include educating and training animal control personnel and other groups with related interests, educating the public on animal guardianship responsibility and promoting understanding and cooperation between the public and animal control personnel, serving as a resource for information on animal control issues in the state, providing expertise on animal control issues to municipal, county and state officials, developing training standards for animal control personnel, and acting as a liaison with other organizations and groups with related interests. For more information, go to [www.vtaca.org](http://www.vtaca.org) or call Earl Dionne at 802-434-3267 or email [edionne@gmavt.net](mailto:edionne@gmavt.net).

**Connecticut**

People will now be able to sue for economic and punitive damages if their animal companions are intentionally injured or killed.



The Department of Agriculture will be able to recover some of its expenses when state animal control officers seize large animals in cruelty cases.

**Massachusetts**

Unfortunately, despite unanimous passage in the House and an overwhelming bipartisan majority vote in the Senate, the Governor vetoed a dissection choice bill which would have given students with religious or ethical objections alternatives.

Still pending are bills to improve the animal fighting statute and several bills that would be harmful to wildlife.

Animal cruelty penalties have finally been increased in a new law that also allows social service workers to report suspected cases of animal cruelty.

**Maine**

Critical funds for a statewide spay/neuter program will now be available through an income tax check-off.

Pet owners will now be able to plan for the future needs of their companion animals by establishing a trust in their will for their animals' ongoing care.

**New Hampshire**

The standards that apply to the retail sale of animals will now apply to commercial dog breeders, and an increase in the licensing fees will help fund the inspection process.

A bill to establish a spring bear baiting season and to better define outdoor shelter requirements for dogs both failed.

NH became the eighth state to mandate a record-keeping system for the disposition and injuries of racing greyhounds with the landmark passage of the Greyhound Protection Act.

**Rhode Island**

A new dangerous dog law will include mandatory sterilization for dogs who have been declared vicious and greater flexibility in the range of sanctions that can be ordered by vicious dog panels.

A bill that would have increased the penalties for animal cruelty and required mandatory psychological evaluations for defendants died in committee.

**Vermont**

An all-encompassing animal cruelty bill will expand felony provisions; define minimum living space requirements for permanently confined cats; double the minimum tether size for dogs; and better define adequate food, water, exercise and shelter for animals.

A statewide spay/neuter subsidy program will enable low-income households to sterilize their pets.

Landowners will now have more limited authorization to shoot bears damaging certain types of property.

Go to [www.hsus.org](http://www.hsus.org) for more details about state legislation affecting animals. For more information about any of these bills, contact the HSUS New England Regional Office at 802-368-2790.

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