

STATE BAR OF MICHIGAN ANIMAL LAW SECTION NEWSLETTER



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The Moral Value of Companion Animals: Are They Something or Someone?

By Angie Vega LLB, LLM

Seeing dogs and cats in holiday pictures sent to friends and family is not unusual.

From celebrating their birthdays and making them part of important family events to paying for specialized food and veterinary care and acquiring health insurance, companion animals have gone from being pets or even best friends to being considered cherished family members.

Throughout history, humans and their companion animals have had a range of relationships. For instance, humans used to have dogs and cats for utilitarian purposes, where they would live outside and provide some sort of service to their master, such as herding animals, hunting 'pests' or food, or guarding the home. There might have been affection towards one another. Nevertheless, it was fair to expect their lives to be cut short at any moment due to diseases or other animals.

Today, this relationship looks very different. The bond between humans and nonhuman animal companions has significantly evolved and is stronger than ever.¹ Companion animals are treated by the average family as full family members, where they provide companionship and happiness. In addition, studies have shown that having a pet can improve mental health, reduce stress, and lead to a longer, healthier life.² They are different from many other animals in that we live with them, give them a name, and do not eat them.³ In today's world, it is not uncommon for people to consider their companion animals as valued members of their family. This phenomenon occurs in most families with a "pet," and families in the United States⁴ and the United Kingdom⁵ are no exception.

The significance of companion animals in our lives has been steadily growing. The evolving needs and dynamics of society have profoundly impacted our relationship with these beloved



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Co-Editor's Note

Welcome to the first issue of the Newsletter for 2024. We are now ending our 29th year as a section. The Section had its initial official meeting at the 1995 State Bar of Michigan Annual Meeting. Our Section is the first state-wide animal law section in the United States; something that we can all take pride in.

Michigan State University College of Law Animal Law Fellow Angie Vega wrote this issue's lead article on the moral value of companion animals. Be sure to read her biography at the end of her article. You will be impressed by her academic achievements and diverse activities in working for animals. She is from Colombia and I have included a short summary article in Recent Animal Law News about the end of bullfighting in Colombia.

We have detailed news about the work and backgrounds of one of the co-recipients of this year's Wanda Nash Awards, Lauren Deguid, as published in various editions of the Legal News. (An article about Eli Massey, the other co-recipient, will be published in our next issue.)

Other articles include Recent Animal Law News from Michigan, the USA, and around the world, the Section's recent financial report, the Section's publishing approach (please read!), and this year's Nominating Committee report.

We are changing the look of the Newsletter with this issue for variety and to create a more updated look. We continue to print the issue in all color including photographs and graphics.

We continue using lighter weight paper with this issue although print quality is unchanged. The heavier paper of prior issues was creating some logistics and printing issues. Some of our photos this issue come from public access photos from the Smithsonian and provide a more varied look to the Newsletter.

I recently counted the pages and issues published by the Section since we were founded in 1995. Our first Newsletter was in 1997. Since that time, we have published 48 issues of the Newsletter (this issue is number 48) and have been the featured section in two issues of the SBM's Michigan Bar Journal with a third one planned for early 2025. We have published over 600 pages of content over the years!

As always, I will make my standard request, please remember that this is your newsletter, too. Helpful articles are always needed. In fact, if we can get one good main article for each issue, we can do the rest.

Co-Editor Maggie Sadoff and I welcome new authors and articles. Please consider writing an article that will be of interest to your fellow Section members. We only ask that you talk with us first so that we can discuss general article parameters and publication timing.

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animals. Busy schedules, smaller families, and moving to urban areas are some of the factors that have taken humans to be closer to their companion animals.⁶ The advance of veterinary medicine and technology is a critical factor as well. Dogs and cats are living longer than ever.⁷ Parasite control treatments allow us to have a relationship with animals without worrying that they will make us sick. In addition, many of yesterday's deadly diseases are treatable today. It can be asserted that when someone welcomes a dog or a cat into their family, they do so with the expectation of forming a deep and enduring bond. This assumption is based on the understanding that that animal will likely have a relatively long lifespan, allowing ample time to create a strong and meaningful connection. As that bond develops and grows stronger, it becomes more difficult to watch them endure pain. Studies even show that humans grieve their nonhuman animal companions like they grieve close family members.⁸ Indeed, the choice to welcome an animal into the family is far from random. People make this decision because animals bring genuine happiness and a profound sense of purpose, but also under the understanding that their responsibility towards their new nonhuman family member will extend over the long haul.

It is no secret that people love their animals, not like they love a valuable piece of jewelry, but as family members. For instance, in 2022, around 94% of people with companion animals in the U.S.⁹ and the U.K.¹⁰ considered them part of the family. But how about the law? Does the legal system value companion animals in the same way as society does? The U.S. and the U.K. legal systems have evolved differently in many aspects. However, when it comes to the legal treatment

of animals, both countries, as with the vast majority of other countries, classify them as property. A chattel, just like a toaster, a phone, or a computer.¹¹ At first glance, this may not seem problematic and even logical to many. After all, legal systems are built around the notions of persons and property. However, the strict interpretation of this classification poses some deeper issues, particularly to those that highly regard their nonhuman animals within the context of their family.

When a companion animal is harmed by the intentional or negligent conduct of a third person, the "owner" of the companion animal can file a lawsuit against the tortfeasor for the harm or loss suffered by that person. The same principle applies in both the U.S. and the U.K. The goal is to put the injured party in the same position they would have been in if the tort had not occurred to make the plaintiff whole. This area of the law has been developed through case law. The remedies in torts are damages, which provide financial compensation to the plaintiff for their losses. This is with the goal of compensating the plaintiff, not punishing the defendant.

Let's illustrate this issue. Imagine your beloved 7-year-old mutt dog, Benny, is beaten up by your neighbor because he went onto his property.



You have been together for many years, and even though he may not be as energetic and may even have some health issues, your love for him is ever-growing. You take him to the vet regularly to ensure he is healthy. You go on walks together, watch TV, and cuddle at night. Benny means the world to you! You love him unconditionally, and he gives you happiness and purpose in return. Benny does not die immediately. However, he undergoes extensive treatment and stays at the hospital for many days. You become anxious and stressed. Focusing at work becomes almost impossible to accomplish. You cannot sleep, wondering how Benny must be feeling. You wonder whether he is confused, in pain, and probably thinking you abandoned him. Your life turns upside down by the thought of losing him. Ultimately, Benny passes due to his injuries. You are devastated. You thought you had at least a few more years to experience fond moments together. However, he has been abruptly taken away from you. Certainly, Benny cannot be brought back to life, and you cannot bear the thought of welcoming another dog into your home. To you, Benny was indeed irreplaceable.

If Benny were a human family member, you would have a number of claims available to recover for your emotional injuries depending on where you are. Unfortunately, the value of companion animals is yet to be reflected in the legal system. As property, the current valuation of companion animals (including Benny) is based on their market value. This is the commercial value they had prior to the injury or death. Just what you would have been able to recover if someone had damaged or destroyed an item of personal property. The remedy for trespass to chattels or conversion of personal property or goods is special or economic damages; to the law, Benny is not more than that. How about the emotional distress, pain, and suffering, or in other words, the emotional damages suffered by their families? Is it taken into account when calculating damages suffered? The short answer for both countries is— most likely not.¹²

To some, it may seem like the right approach. Ultimately, economic damages are readily ascertainable and predictable. However, in tort law, the purpose of damages is to compensate plaintiffs for their loss.

The value of a dog like Benny is not economical. It is sentimental! The reality is that very few people are concerned with the economic value of their dogs and cats, and unless an animal is purebred, has special training, or represents some commercial utility, they most likely have a nominal value at best. In turn, bringing a civil lawsuit will likely represent high attorney fees and court costs, compared with the possibility of being awarded the purchase or adoption fee of the companion animal at most. What does this mean? It means that under the current system, companion animal owners are not being compensated for their actual loss, but rather for a loss they do not bear. Moreover, the actions of tortfeasors lack significant deterrents, allowing them to harm other people's companion animals without real consequence.

Sentimental injuries are indeed more challenging to determine. That is why they are compensated in limited circumstances, such as in personal injury cases and wrongful death. However, this difficulty is not a valid reason to ignore them. On the contrary, the relationship people build with their companion animals is so unique and relevant that it should guarantee that they can recover for their emotional damages. Ultimately, we live with our companion animals; they take part in our daily lives and are distinguished from other animals. They depend on us, and we emotionally rely on them as well. It is a task for the legal system to determine a way to provide compensation, allowing plaintiffs to recover for their injuries, which are predominantly emotional in companion animal cases.

Some areas of the law have started to reflect the value of companion animals in today's society—more specifically, divorce cases, trusts law, and even the law of judicial liens. Some states in the U.S. have even started to enact hot car laws (more than half of the 50 U.S. states) to protect animals in hot cars.¹³ Similar to laws that protect children. However, the development in the area of torts remains rather dull. While the U.K. and the U.S. continue to deny recovery based on dated arguments, such as the long-standing principle that companion animals are property and that allowing recovery of general damages

would open the floodgates of litigation, other countries legally recognized that today's modern family is multispecies, in which animals play the role of beloved family members.¹⁴

As other areas of the law continue to evolve to recognize the significance of the relationship between humans and their nonhuman family members, it is time for a reform that allows compensation of damages truly suffered as opposed to mere fair market value, which, interestingly, is nothing but unfair. Perhaps, a law is more appropriate to move forward in tort law, where the circumstances of recovery and limitations are clearly delineated. In that way, there is a system in place that provides adequate compensation and avoids the possibility of unrestrained damages. This would be a win not just for plaintiffs but also a small win for companion animals whose place within the family ought to be legally recognized. 🐾

This article is courtesy of the UK Journal of Animal Law and Angie Vega. The article was previously published by the UK Journal of Animal Law in May 2024.

About the Author

Angie Vega is a Colombian attorney and the current Animal Law Fellow at Michigan State University. She has used her civil and common law expertise to advance animal law in the academic field. Her scholarly work explores the intersectionality of animal law with other areas and how to improve animal protection and advance the interests of animals within the legal system. Angie's legal research and teaching focus on topics such as the human-companion animal bond, animal law in Latin America, Animal Rights, and the Rights of Nature. She created the Animal Law Latin American Collection on the animallaw.info website, where she has also written articles on various topics. Angie is the Regional Director for Latin America, the Caribbean, and Oceania for World Moot on International Law and Animal Rights, an HSUS Humane Policy Volunteer Leader, a Mercy for Animals Detroit Hub member, and a UN Harmony with Nature Expert.





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Recent Animal Law News

By Donald Garlit

Co-editor's note: The news below includes brief summaries of important and newsworthy items of interest. We chose these as being of most interest to our members. Many items are now appearing in the legal, national, and world press and not all can be included. You will see that some items cover situations in countries other than the United States. Improving conditions for animals is achieving worldwide interest.

Normally we only cover cases that have been fully adjudicated or legislation that has been signed into law. We are not always following those approaches in all updates as there are several situations in the early stages that present interesting legal or legislative approaches that may be discussed below.

Additionally, we will continue to discuss recent cases which have involved dog attacks and animal cruelty which have resulted in serious charges against the owner/guardian. It appears that prosecutors are taking these situations much more seriously especially when there is a past pattern of dog aggression or animal cruelty.

More States Ban Wildlife Killing Contests in Late 2023

Both Oregon and New York banned wildlife killing contests in the last months of 2023. This makes 10 states which have enacted bans totally or just for some species. For instance, Vermont and New Mexico ban coyote killing contests while California bans all wildlife killing contests.

The contests are very controversial as participants typically "compete" in categories such as most animals killed, largest killed, youngest killed, etc. It is often regarded as just wanton killing and violence. Some hunters and wildlife management officials believe that these contests damage the public's view of hunting.

Sources are Humane Society of the United States at:

<https://www.humanesociety.org/news/breaking-gov-hochul-signs-historic-bill-end-wildlife-killing-contests-new-york>

and

National Caucus of Environmental Legislators (written before the Oregon and New York bans) at: <https://www.ncelenviro.org/resources/wildlife-killing-contests-fact-sheet/#:~:text=Wildlife%20>

[killing%20contests%20are%20legal%20in%20all%20but,and%20Virginia%20introduced%20bills%20to%20ban%20these%20contests.](#)

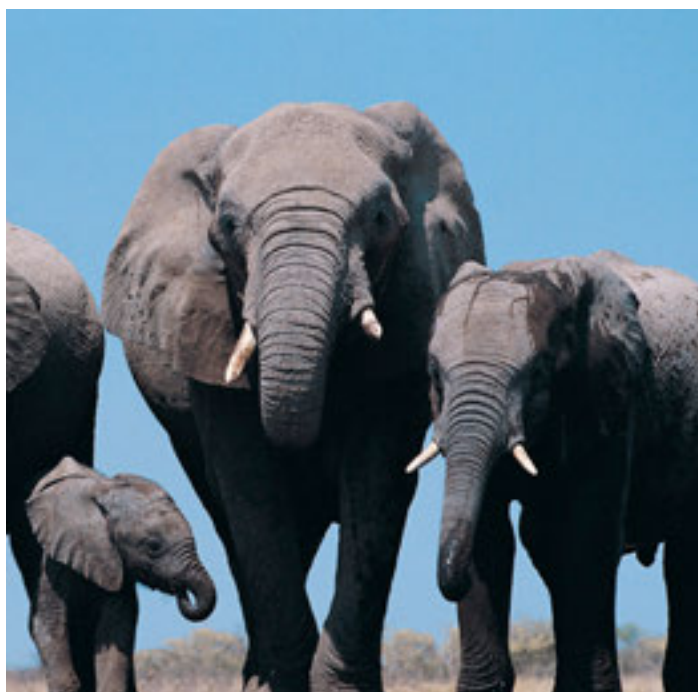
Right to Bodily Liberty for Elephants Ordinance Passed in Ojai, California

The ordinance passed in September 2023 prevents elephants from being held in the city with two exceptions. The Background statement in the Administrative Report of the ordinance states that it “stems from the findings of animal researchers who have found elephants to be similarly situated to humans, as they have long-term memories, learning abilities, empathy and self-awareness.”

Ojai is the first US city to recognize the rights of a nonhuman animal.

Exceptions are: 1) the elephant(s) is at a sanctuary accredited by the Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries and 2) the elephant(s) is at a sanctuary that allows the elephant to exercise their autonomy and not be on public display as well as several other conditions.

Ojai is a town on less than 10,000 population in Ventura County and northwest of Los Angeles. There are no elephants in the town at this time. Purportedly, one was held in captivity in the 1980’s and even forced to use roller skates!



Sources are the Nonhuman Rights Project at: <https://www.nonhumanrights.org/blog/ojai-animal-rights-legislation/>

and

Administrative Report on the Ordinance from the City of Ojai at: https://ojai.granicus.com/MetaViewer.php?view_id=1&meta_id=37414

England Bans Glue Traps

Glue traps are banned in England for public use by a bill passed in July 2024. This makes England the third UK nation to pass such a ban. Similar bans have already been passed by Scotland and Wales. New Zealand has a similar ban. The English law will permit so-called “pest” control operatives to use the traps under license if no other solution to a problem involving public health and safety is available.

Glue traps are aimed at rats and mice and are regarded as being very cruel. Trapped animals stuck to the glue board can suffocate or damage themselves by means such as self-amputation among other actions in a generally futile effort to extricate themselves.

Sources are Humane Society International at: <https://www.hsi.org/news-resources/inhumane-rodent-glue-traps-to-be-banned-in-england/>

and

Glue Trap (Offences) Bill from the UK Parliament at: <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/bills/cbill/58-02/0027/210027.pdf>

Massachusetts Bans Use of Wild Animals in the Circus and Traveling Shows

The ban covers elephants, big cats, primates, giraffes, and bears. The bill was signed by Governor Maura Healy in August 2024 and will take full effect on January 1, 2025. Ten other states and well over 100 municipalities have similar bans. The Massachusetts House roll call vote was 157 Ayes, Zero Nays, and 2 Abstentions.

These types of bans are being enacted around the world. They are especially prevalent in Central and South America.



We have reported on these laws and changes to the circus over the years. Of course, one of the most newsworthy of circus changes was the elimination of animal acts and the beginning of a new national tour by Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Circus (AKA “The Greatest Show on Earth”) last year.

Both sources below go into detail about the issues and problems of wild animals in traveling shows and exhibitions.

Sources are Commonwealth of Massachusetts government at: <https://www.mass.gov/news/governor-healey-signs-bill-protecting-animal-welfare> and

Humane Society of the United States at: <https://www.humanesociety.org/news/massachusetts-becomes-11th-state-end-use-elephants-tigers-and-other-wild-animals-circuses>

Pet Abduction Bill Passes Parliament and Applies to England and Northern Ireland

The law went into effect in August and will make the taking of a cat or dog a criminal offense with possible penalty of a fine or a maximum of five years in prison. English common law (dating back to the

Middle Ages) considers animals property (similar to United States legal principles which derive from English common law) and taking of a cat or dog was previously covered by the Retail Theft Act of 1968. This is progress in the recognition of the legal status of animals.

Source is the BBC at: <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c255dv4zrglo>

Colombia Bans Bullfighting – Only 7 Countries Still Allow the “Sport”

President Gustavo Petro signed the bill in July and it will take effect in 3 years. This will provide people affiliated with the activity time to transition to new livelihoods. This probably ends a 2 decade battle over bullfighting in the country although opponents of the ban may challenge it in court. Opponents have stated their opposition is based on people who depend economically on bullfighting as well as those who consider it as part of their “cultural heritage.”

President Petro has been a long-time opponent of bullfighting including during his time as Mayor of Bogota. He stated on social media: “Congratulations to those who managed that death will no longer be a show.”

The seven countries that still allow bullfighting are France, Portugal, Mexico, Ecuador, Peru, Spain, and Venezuela. There is much opposition to the activity in all the listed countries and some regions and cities in the countries have already banned the activity.

Sources are CNN at: <https://www.cnn.com/2024/05/28/americas/colombia-bullfight-ban-bill-passed-intl-hnk/index.html>

and

AP News at: <https://apnews.com/article/colombia-bullfighting-ban-a7b7d0a8f87abef0e79c4eec693af574>

\$7.5 Million Award to Dog Attack Victim – Dog was Rehomed from Los Angeles Animal Services without Information on Bite History

Victim Argelia Alvarado was attacked without warning in 2020 by the rehomed dog adopted by her son. The dog had a history of at least one attack on a human earlier in 2020. The history was not provided to her son although it was required by California statute (“Truth in Pet Adoption” law).

Mrs. Alvarado was severely maimed by the dog with injuries to both arms. A photo provided in the article listed below appears to indicate that she eventually lost her right arm.

The Los Angeles City Council awarded a record \$7.5 million in a settlement to the victim in June 2024. A history of prior awards and attacks by rehomed dogs in Los Angeles is included in the article linked below.

Source is Animals 24-7 at: <https://www.animals24-7.org/2024/06/16/7-5-million-award-for-mauling-by-pit-bull-rehomed-from-l-a-animal-services/>

Oregon Funds Animal Cruelty Deputy District Attorney and Makes It a Permanent Program in Oregon – First in the United States

The following is from the website of the Animal Legal Defense Fund describing budget funding action in Oregon:

“On August 4, 2023, Oregon Governor Tina Kotek signed bill S.B. 5506 into law that takes effect immediately and among other funding allocates



funds from the state budget to maintain the Animal Cruelty Deputy District Attorney (AC-DDA) role and make it a permanent program within the Department of Justice in Oregon. In 2013, the Animal Legal Defense Fund provided funding that enabled Oregon to become the first U.S. state with a special prosecutor dedicated to pursuing animal-related cases.”

The information from the ALDF notes that the AC-DDA has prosecuted 250 cases and consulted with prosecutors on a further 350 cases since being established in 2013.

Source is Animal Legal Defense Fund at: <https://aldf.org/article/oregon-governor-signs-bill-into-law-to-fund-animal-cruelty-special-prosecutor/>

US Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Prohibits Use of M-44 “Cyanide Bombs” on BLM Managed Lands

The BLM prohibited use of the “cyanide bombs” in February 2024. The BLM Information Bulletin mentions that there are already use limitations in Idaho, California, Oregon and Washington. These bombs have been set in the past to cruelly kill certain species of wild animals. Unfortunately, they have also killed family animals and badly injured humans as they are often unmarked.

The BLM Information Bulletin mentioned that Canyon Mansfield, 14 at the time, and his dog, Kasey the Labrador were walking on BLM land within 400 feet of their home when Kasey triggered a bomb and fumes killed him and badly injured



Canyon. They were not mentioned by name in the Information Bulletin, just by description. When the family sued, the government defended claiming Canyon's negligence caused the death and injury. The case was eventually settled.

We covered the case in the Recent Animal Law News section of the Early Winter 2020-2021 issue of the Newsletter. There is a photograph of Canyon and Kasey in the AP News article linked below.

There have been moves to introduce bans on the use of the M-44's on state and Federal land

by Congress in recent years which have gone nowhere. Interestingly, President Richard Nixon issued an executive order which banned the used of poisons on Federal land in 1972. The order was rescinded by President Ronald Reagan in 1982.

Sources are BLM Information Bulletin at: <https://www.blm.gov/policy/ib-2024-024>

and

AP News at: <https://apnews.com/article/coyotes-predators-cyanide-bomb-ban-federal-agency-6ea88fc23549b26d1b0751f0cc0f42c>



**Tickets available at
Michigan Theater online
box office.**

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 12, 7 PM, MICHIGAN THEATER, ANN ARBOR



Calling all dog lovers, cat lovers, animal lovers, animal advocates, animal lawyers and law students ... anyone who likes a good film. "Dogs are People Too: A Four-Legged Civil Rights Movement" will entertain, enchant, encourage!

The evening begins with the film screening, followed by Q&A with Director Hendrik Faller & Producer Tom Miller; Chris Olson, Michigan animal law attorney and Prof. Jessica Rubin, UConn School of Law Animal Law Clinic, both featured in the film; and State Representative Stephanie A. Young. Join us for an "After Glow" with refreshments (the \$25.00 ticket price includes one drink).

Animal Law Section Newsletter: Publishing Approach and New Articles

By Donald Garlit

Co-editor's note:

Please read this article
as we are always
looking for new
authors and articles.

We are all used to the 24x7 news cycle and ubiquity of social media. The Animal Law Section Newsletter's approach is different. In this

co-editor's note, we will explain our approach.

The Animal Law Section Newsletter is a mix of contemporaneous news, recounting of Section events, articles that memorialize important events that may not be covered elsewhere, obituaries (sometimes), and articles that may be of practical value to Section members as well as others including non-member attorneys and members of the public.

Many of the articles are thought-starters that show what is being done or might be done to help animals. Not all of the articles are about big issues. Some just recount how someone helped a single animal. **Much can be accomplished if we all do something to help animals.**

The Newsletter is more than just stories of recent events as it publishes articles with long-term impact, too. In many ways, it is a recounting of the Animal Law movement through the years in Michigan, the United States, and around the world.

Typical Topics

I am often asked what kind of articles that we want to publish. I usually tell the questioner we are looking for well-written articles that 1) show or propose new trends in the law, 2) are of interest to judges and prosecutors, or 3) show attorneys how to make money and support their practice with animal law. Yet, these are not the only articles that we are willing to publish. I am open to considering just about any well written article which shows a nexus between animals and the law.

Other Possibilities

Here are some thoughts on other possible articles for the Newsletter even though some articles covering these topics have already been published in the Newsletter.

- Animal Law cases worked on by members with details even if the outcome was not favorable – sometimes lessons can be learned from lost cases.
- Human/animal interest stories where members have helped an animal or a group of animals even if the help is a rescue and does not involve the legal system. Consider this category: Section members in action.
- Animal law practice areas or specialties that have turned into paying fee-based work – animal law work does not always have to be pro bono and it should not always be pro bono.

We are willing to publish articles recounting events of years ago if the article is relevant to today's animal law concepts. We published an article about Annie the dog in the Fall 2019 issue which was years after her victimizer was convicted of animal cruelty. Why? Simply because the judge allowed Annie's guardian to speak for her as her voice in the courtroom. I thought this should be memorialized. As an aside, Annie was a very sweet dog who was much loved and never should have suffered. She was adopted and lived many years with her guardians.

And Finally -----

On a somewhat different note, I have even suggested that I would publish an article that would show why we should not be empathetic and compassionate towards animal suffering if it was well written. No one has ever taken me up on the issue. I think that says that people who are being cruel to animals have a very difficult time in explaining their actions.

In general, we do not like unsolicited articles as the authors may have their own concepts of writing style, approach, quality, etc. which may not be consistent with the Newsletter's approach. We like copyrighted articles as they do not require editing. We are willing to discuss any proposed articles and suggest general parameters.

We are glad to publish any articles about the nexus of law and animals. I especially aim this comment at law students who may want an article published in the Newsletter of the first statewide animal law section in the United States and active since 1995! 🐾



A Voice For Voiceless

MSU Law student honored with Wanda Nash Award

By Sheila Pursglove
Legal News

Co-editor's note: The following article is courtesy of the Legal News and Sheila Pursglove. Sheila is a great friend of the Section and has always been interested in our activities and awards as well as interviewing Section members about their work.

With a love of animals, it's no surprise to find MSU Law 3L student Lauren Duguid is passionate about animal law.

"They don't have a voice, so humans must use theirs to protect them," Duguid says. "They have feelings and play a critical role in our lives. To help avoid cruelty through the law is critical because they would otherwise go ignored. Law is a powerful tool that can be used to ensure their welfare."

Duguid is one of two recipients of the State Bar of Michigan's Wanda A. Nash Award, named after the founder of the SBM Animal Law Section. The annual award, that she will receive on May 9, recognizes a 3L law student at a Michigan law school for substantial contributions to animal law. The co-recipient is Eli Massey from the University of Michigan Law School.

"I'm extremely honored to receive the award," says Duguid, who was nominated by Animal Law Fellow Angie Vega. "I worked hard this year to make the organization the best it possibly could be. I built an e-board with students passionate about animals and using the law to help them. We were all dedicated to the cause and did everything we could to educate the student body about the importance of animals, nature, and protecting both. I'm honored the org is being recognized by the State Bar of Michigan Animal Law Section."

Serving as president of the Student Animal Legal Defense Fund this year—where she previously served as treasurer—Duguid was instrumental in recruiting 15 additional students, while also helping raise more than \$300 for the Capital Area Humane Society.

"Being the president of SALDF this year has made my law school experience so much fun. I was constantly inspired by the e-board and general body," she says. "Creating a community of people who love animals and want to use the law to protect them has made my job very easy. Everyone wanted to participate and help those without a voice."

Duguid recalls that in her childhood, her father set up an aquarium tank in her room, catching praying mantises, salamanders, and other creatures to inhabit it. Duguid learned about the creatures and the important role they play in the ecosystem.

"He would also name every spider we saw in our house 'Harmless' and allow our 'pet' spider outside after watching it for a while," she says.

Next up was a hamster named Cody, gifted to her in elementary school. After he died, she set her sights on a puppy from a litter from her grandmother's dog in Poland.

"When I was visiting my Babcia, I asked my mother if I could keep one. Long story short, I flew home from Poland with my first dog, Lola. Lola and I were always together and I spent my entire childhood with her," says Duguid, who has shared her law school years with a cat named Stella.

Duguid became passionate about the law from a young age, when there was always some sort of court or political channel playing on the TV.



Wanda Nash Award recipient, Lauren Duguid, with MSU Animal Law Fellow Angie Vega and Professor David Favre at the award ceremony, May 2024. Angie nominated Lauren for the award. (Photo courtesy of MSU College of Law)

"I was inspired by the lawyers who used their careers to change people's lives and get them the help they needed," she says. "I took classes in high school and undergrad that were law-focused, which helped me know that law was my life calling. I've always had a passion for helping people, and law is the perfect way to zealously fight for people's rights."

She earned a bachelor of science degree in Earth, Society, and Environmental Sustainability from the University of Illinois, and minored in Criminology, Law, and Society, before heading to MSU Law in 2021. In addition to the SALDF, she has served as head representative for the independent Bar preparation course BARBRI; as president of the Public Interest Law Society; and as marketing chair for the Women's Law Caucus. She particularly appreciates the feeling of community at the law school.

"Everyone is here to help you succeed and is your biggest cheerleader," she says. "The professors are inspiring, and the students are passionate and hardworking. I'm so proud to be a part of this year's graduating class, as I know everyone will be using their degrees to help change the world for the better."

Highlights of law school include interning at the Ingham County Probate Court in the summer of 2022.

"I enjoyed watching lawyers fight for what they believe in, as well as helping prepare documents for various people in the courtroom," she says.

Her 2L year also saw her interning at the MSU Law Immigration Clinic, zealously fighting for her clients to stay in the country and seeing her work make an impact on clients. She spent last summer clerking for Fidelity National Title in Omaha, Neb., with 13 other clerks who became close friends and gave her a deeper insight into various law subjects.

She has externed in her final semester in the Environment, Natural Resources, and Agriculture Division at the Michigan Department of Attorney General.

Duguid will move from Okemos to Muskegon in July, to start her post-grad career by working in the Family Court Division of the Prosecutor's Office.



MSU College of Law 3L student Lauren Duguid, pictured with her feline friend Stella, is one of two recipients of the State Bar of Michigan's Wanda A. Nash Award, named after the founder of the SBM Animal Law Section. (Photo courtesy of Lauren Duguid)

"I will be helping children who are victims of child abuse and neglect. I know I'll be fulfilling my career goals, as it will help keep the children safe and hold parents accountable," she says. "My career goals are to help people through the law. I wish to use my degree to help make people's lives better and the community safer as a whole."

In her leisure time, this native of Barrington, Ill., enjoys traveling, painting, hiking, and skiing.

She has happy memories of study abroad in Poland, her mother's native country. In 2019, she spent two months interning at an international law firm in Krakow that helped seek asylum for refugees, and studied at Jagiellonian University.

"Growing up, I would spend my summers visiting my family. When I was given the chance to study abroad at Jagiellonian, I jumped at the opportunity," she says. "During my semester there, I was able to spend time with my family, immerse myself in my family's culture, and see Poland from a different point of view. Seeing it as a family visitor, rather than a tourist, was a completely different experience." 🐾



STATE BAR OF MICHIGAN MEMORANDUM

To: Members, Animal Law Section, State Bar of Michigan

From: Nominating Committee: Morgan Pattan, Jennifer Pierce, and Bee Friedlander

Subject: 2024 Nominating Committee Report (for the period October 1, 2024 through September 30, 2027)

Dated: August 7, 2024

Council members are elected for 3-year terms, and there are 3 positions open this year. Officers are elected for a two-year term, and we are in the middle of those terms so there are no officer nominations.

The annual meeting is September 11, 2024, 4:00 to 5:40 PM, and will be virtual. All Section members are invited to attend and participate. Details will be sent via SBM Connect. See the Section bylaws for information about the election (Article IV) and nominating committee (Article VII, Section 2).

The committee is pleased to recommend the following slate of council members for the term expiring September 30, 2027:

P70928 Sara Joy Sturing, West Bloomfield (current Council member, eligible for second term)

P86819 Heather Silcott, Troy (current Council member elected in 2023 to complete term of another member, eligible for two full terms)

P87176 Rebecca Rene Sutton, Grand Rapids (new to Council)

The Committee recognizes and thanks Celeste Dunn who is completing her second Council term.

A nominee who has not served before is required to submit the following information:

1. Resume
2. Date admitted to the bar
3. Amount of time as an Animal Law Section member
4. List the involvement in animal advocacy activities, committee participation, authored articles both as an individual and as a member of the Animal Law Section
5. Short explanation of interest in the Council position (100 words maximum)

Advisory Committee

This committee was created several years ago, comprised of council members who were term limited, to act as a mentor/advisor to Officers and Council members who have not served in Section leadership previously. Tom Boven, Raj Prasad, Richard Angelo, Kieran Marion, Bee Friedlander are members. Each new Officer or Council member is paired with an Advisory Committee member. 🐾

Treasurer's Report – 2023-2024 FYTD (11 Months through August 2024)

This is a summary of the Animal Law Section's financial status as of August 31, 2024 (11 months of the FY).

Paid membership is 246 and basically unchanged from the prior year. Graduating law students are allowed and encouraged to join for the first year after law school at no charge.

Revenue for the year is \$3,630. This is the third year of the attorney dues reduction to \$15 from \$25 where dues had been since the Section was formed in 1995.

Expenses for the year so far are \$3,265 which include one issue of the Newsletter (\$1,169), awards and honorariums related to the Brandi, Sadie, and Wanda Nash Awards (\$1,450), award ceremony expenses such as food and supplies (\$200), symposium speaker designated awards to animal-related groups (\$400), and credit card processing charges (\$46).

Net income for the year so far is \$365.

The funds balance at the end of August 2024 is \$19,996; an increase of \$365 compared with the prior FY year-end balance of \$19,631 on September 30, 2023.

The expenses for the latest issue of the Newsletter will be probably be recognized in the financial results for the next FY 2024-2025.

Some ceremony expenses have yet to be recognized in the accounting records. I expect financial results to possibly be a minor deficit for the fiscal year.

Respectfully submitted,

Donald Garlit

Treasurer

September 2024





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