

# the Animals' ADVOCATE

Spring 2005  
Volume 24 Number 1

THE QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE ANIMAL LEGAL DEFENSE FUND

## INSIDE:

How to  
Spot a  
Hoarder

See Page 6

## Let Freedom Howl

*ALDF victory for dogs makes things finer in North Carolina*

**T**he judge spoke, and slowly his meaning sank in. Guilty, guilty, guilty. *And ownership of all animals transferred to the Animal Legal Defense Fund!*

People rose to their feet, hugging, kissing, crying. Some sat mute with shock, trying to absorb the joy of the future and the horror of the past all in one gulp. The defense attorney jumped to his feet and shouted in protest.

But for that moment in a little courtroom in rural North Carolina, the voices of hundreds of dogs who had suffered in silence for so long were finally heard.

On March 31, just four months after ALDF answered the call from local residents alarmed by the putrid conditions they had seen dogs suffering in at the home of Barbara and Robert Woodley, Lee County District Court Judge Albert A. Corbett, Jr. found the Woodleys guilty of criminal animal cruelty, giving them 45-day jail sentences, suspended on condition that they do not possess any animals for 5 years.

It was the moment ALDF and scores of volunteers had been waiting for: the moment when the light of justice shone on the intolerable conditions on the Woodley property and offered the hope of freedom and an end to the suffering.

Barbara Woodley was found guilty on 12 criminal animal cruelty counts and Robert Woodley on eight. Ownership of 17 dogs and three birds was forfeited to ALDF.

In a separate proceeding, ALDF sued civilly to



halt the cruelty and get possession of the approximately 90 dogs that have already been removed as well as the roughly 200 dogs remaining on the Woodley property. Judge Corbett agreed, granting ALDF a permanent injunction. ALDF retains custody during any possible appeal.

You didn't need to see the horror of life at the  
*Continued on page 4*

**Volunteer Laurie Griffin gives a Sanford survivor a warm embrace**

For the **RECORD**

“A wild or feral cat is an unprotected species in Minnesota. If you have feral cats on your property, you can shoot them. They’re [like] a gopher or a woodchuck. If you know that’s your neighbor’s cat, it’s a different story.”

—**Mark Holsten,**  
Wisconsin Department  
of Natural Resources  
deputy commissioner,  
on a state proposal  
declaring wild or feral  
cats an unprotected  
species and allowing  
them to be shot on sight,  
being debated in April at  
Wisconsin Conservation  
Congress spring meet-  
ings around the state.

“I look at them as an invasive species, plain and simple. If you ... kick your cat out at night, you’ve changed its status.”

—**Mark Smith,**  
La Crosse, Wis., author  
of the proposal

*Letter* from the  
**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

Meet Milo

I’d like you to meet someone very special. He may look like any other dog, but he’s not. He’s a survivor.

His name is Milo. He is a pug, somewhere between three and seven years old, and he is one of the dogs rescued from the Woodley property in Sanford, North Carolina.

Milo is blind. He wasn’t born blind. His eyes were damaged by toxic levels of ammonia. Milo and the other dogs were stuffed into crates with no choice but to wallow in their own filth and feces and the stench of ammonia was overpowering. Some of them perished. Milo barely made it out of there, but I’d like to share with you a little of what his life has been like since then.

Milo lives with Kelly Wright, her husband and their other dogs. Kelly is one of our heroes in Sanford, one of the volunteers who gives tirelessly of her time to care for the dogs taken from the Woodley property. She was drawn to Milo when he was brought to the holding facility for the dogs. When Kelly would call his name, he would tilt his head and it was obvious that he enjoyed hearing her. Yet, Milo was so sickly and frail that the veterinarians thought he wouldn’t survive. Kelly couldn’t stand the thought of Milo leaving this world having never known kindness. She asked if she could take him home with her and the vets agreed that it would be good for him.

Kelly’s vet said that Milo had one of the worst cases of dental disease that she’s ever seen and in several areas of his mouth she could see right down to his jaw bone. Most of his teeth have had to be removed. And, Milo will likely never see again. But Milo has a survivor’s “can do” attitude!

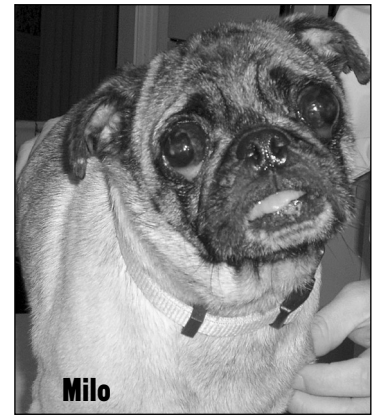
Under Kelly’s watchful care, Milo’s health has improved noticeably. With proper food, he has gained strength and become more playful. His coat is now soft and beautiful and he’s actually starting to look like a pug. He sleeps with his tongue hanging out; that’s his trademark.

His blindness makes it difficult for him to keep up with Kelly’s other dogs, so Kelly carries Milo around the house. She says that he’s becoming a bit of a “momma’s boy.” He won’t eat unless Kelly is in the room with him and after he goes outside for his potty break, he comes back to her, barks and dances in place. He loves to be talked to and tilts his head, as if to say: “I know you’re talking to me.”

In this issue of the *Animals’ Advocate*, you will meet some of the other dogs who, like Milo, are survivors. We wanted you to have a chance to know them, because each one of them has a story, and each one deserves a far better life than they had. As I write these words, we have just learned the wonderful news that we are getting custody of all of the dogs. For that, we are thankful beyond words.

We are thankful to the many volunteers in North Carolina who are so generously caring for the dogs, thankful for Dr. Laureen Bartfield and the other local veterinarians who are donating their time to provide critically needed medical attention, thankful for our brilliant Litigation Director, Bruce Wagman, who has spent every waking hour working on this case since last November, and to our senior attorney, Dana Campbell, and law clerk, Stephanie Engelsman, for their caring and skillful assistance. Last, but never least, we are thankful to you, our members, for helping us to make this all possible.

We don’t know how long the appellate process will go on; what we do know is that we are in for the long haul. We will continue to go to the wall for these dogs. For Milo and for all the other brave little survivors, we owe them nothing less.



*Joyce Tischler*

Joyce Tischler, Executive Director

# The Sanford Eight

On March 31, North Carolina District Court Judge Albert A. Corbett, Jr. ordered roughly 200 dogs to be removed from the fetid conditions at the Woodley property and placed under the care of the Animal Legal Defense Fund. Eight of them – eight with some of the most horrific medical conditions of all – were the basis of eight criminal animal cruelty charges filed against Barbara and Robert Woodley.

These are their stories.

➤ **Angel** was an adult female Miniature Pinscher found January 14 in the main house in a wire cage, about 24 x 18 inches in size, in a room with six other dogs. “She was lying in her own feces and urine,” a witness testified. “She was emaciated, her ribs and skeleton showing. When we came into the room, she tried to rise but could not stand. She got up slightly and then ... she collapsed back down into her own waste.” Veterinarians on the scene were stunned. Muscle atrophy in Angel’s legs had apparently been ongoing for months. She was removed from the home and had to be euthanized two days later.

“We have no idea how long Angel had been suffering,” said Dr. Lauren Bartfield, the lead veterinarian in the Woodley case. “I had been going to the premises for more than two weeks and was denied access to the home on every occasion and told that there were no dogs in there. Obviously, the worst cases were inside and hidden from us.”

➤ That same day, **Buddy**, an adult male Dachshund, was found with his jaw literally hanging down where it had fractured long before. He was missing most of his teeth; his fractured jaw was caused by untreated, severe dental disease, some of which had eaten away holes through his gums into his sinuses.

“They wanted to euthanize him,” Dr. Bartfield said, but ALDF refused. Buddy is already doing much better, and Dr. Bartfield hopes Buddy’s jaw can be repaired and that he can lead a more comfortable life despite the neglect he has been subjected to for so long.

➤ **Darla** is a black female Cocker Spaniel mix who was examined on January 3 and found to have obviously painful eye disease, the pressure causing one of her eyes to protrude and go blind. “She also had significant dental disease,” Bartfield said, “a flea-ridden coat matted with fecal material, and was pregnant. She is now in a foster home waiting on her new ‘forever’ home.”

➤ **Billy Bob** is a male Miniature Pinscher who had such bad dental disease that during his initial exam he turned blue and had trouble breathing. “His dental disease caused pneumonia,” Bartfield said. “That has resolved, but he will have lifelong emphysema-like breathing trouble. Billy Bob’s teeth

were literally falling out in his cage while under our care. By the time the pneumonia resolved and he could safely undergo anesthesia for a dental cleaning, he had nine of 42 teeth left. All nine were in such an advanced state of decay that they had to be removed. He has no teeth remaining.”

“He is doing better but is severely arthritic,” said volunteer Leighann McCollum, “so when you pick him up, you have to handle him very carefully. But then he becomes very sweet.”

➤ **Max**, a male Yorkshire Terrier, was so bald it was difficult to determine what color his fur had been. Blind from cataracts and missing the majority of his teeth due to severe dental disease, he had chronic ear infections and enormous scars in his ears.

The cataracts give Max an almost spiritual appearance. “His eyes are just as white as they can be,” McCollum said. “But he is a very sweet little dog. He follows your voice to see where you are.”

➤ **Nipper**, a female Miniature Pinscher, was found in a pen with four aggressive dogs. She was emaciated, losing her hair, missing many of her teeth and covered with old scars and fresh wounds. “She had an enlarged elbow which opened up three days later and drained a thick pus,” Bartfield said.

➤ One male Boston Terrier, like many of the dogs on the property, had multiple lesions, and his testicles were painfully swollen and ulcerated. “This was from lying on the plywood surface of his kennel which had years’ worth of feces and urine soaked into it, resulting in the scalding and secondary infection of the scrotal sac,” Bartfield said.

➤ A female Boston Terrier had a growth the size of a tangerine on her right hind leg, two small mammary masses, calluses, hair loss and severe scarring and inflammation in both eyes.

“She is doing great now,” said McCollum. “At first, she was terrified. If you even just touched her, she would lose bowel control. Now she will come running over to you and put her feet up on your lap, wanting to be picked up.” 🐾

**Darla had been called DeDe and was going blind before the Sanford volunteers gave her a new life and a new name.**



*“When ALDF stepped in, people came together. Groups and individuals who had never worked together joined hands and found they could all work toward the same goal: saving the animals.”*

**—Volunteer Coordinator  
Pat Sanford**

## Let Freedom Howl

*continued from front page*

Woodley property from outside: you could smell it from the street. But several people did go past the street, up to the kennel buildings and the garage and the house, and there they saw firsthand the hell in which hundreds of dogs and about thirty birds were dwelling.

So they called in the Animal Legal Defense Fund to do something about it last November. ALDF immediately became the driving force behind several court cases that led to Judge Corbett's ruling.

“Individuals and animal welfare groups had been trying to resolve the gross problems at the Woodley compound for many years, but to no avail,” said Pat Sanford, volunteer coordinator for the Sanford Rescue Project. “When ALDF stepped in, people came together. Groups and individuals who had never worked together joined hands and found that they could all work toward the same goal: saving the animals. The realization that a cohesive effort can stop animal cruelty is now at the forefront in North Carolina.”

One of the local residents who was on the Wood-

ley property in December could not believe what she encountered when she first went into the garage.

“I saw crates stacked three or four high, with three or four dogs in each crate,” the witness said in a sworn affidavit. “In some places, there were wooden crates, with wire crates on top of them, and plastic crates on top of those.... I saw dogs in wire crates, who were confined on top of other crates, (and) would eliminate urine and feces directly onto the dogs in the crates below them.

“In the garage, I saw very young puppies, who(m) I estimate to be about six weeks old, and who had never left their crates. When I first entered the garage, the smell of ammonia ... was overpowering. My eyes watered and my lungs hurt.”

After hearing such evidence supporting the ALDF lawsuit, District Court Judge Resson Faircloth III entered a preliminary injunction on Dec. 30 that allowed veterinarians to remove dogs who had significant medical problems and were in need of medical care that could not be administered on the property.

A veterinary team began regular visits to the property on New Year's Day. Several of the veterinarians were trained in animal cruelty cases – but nothing could prepare them for what they saw once they got into the house.

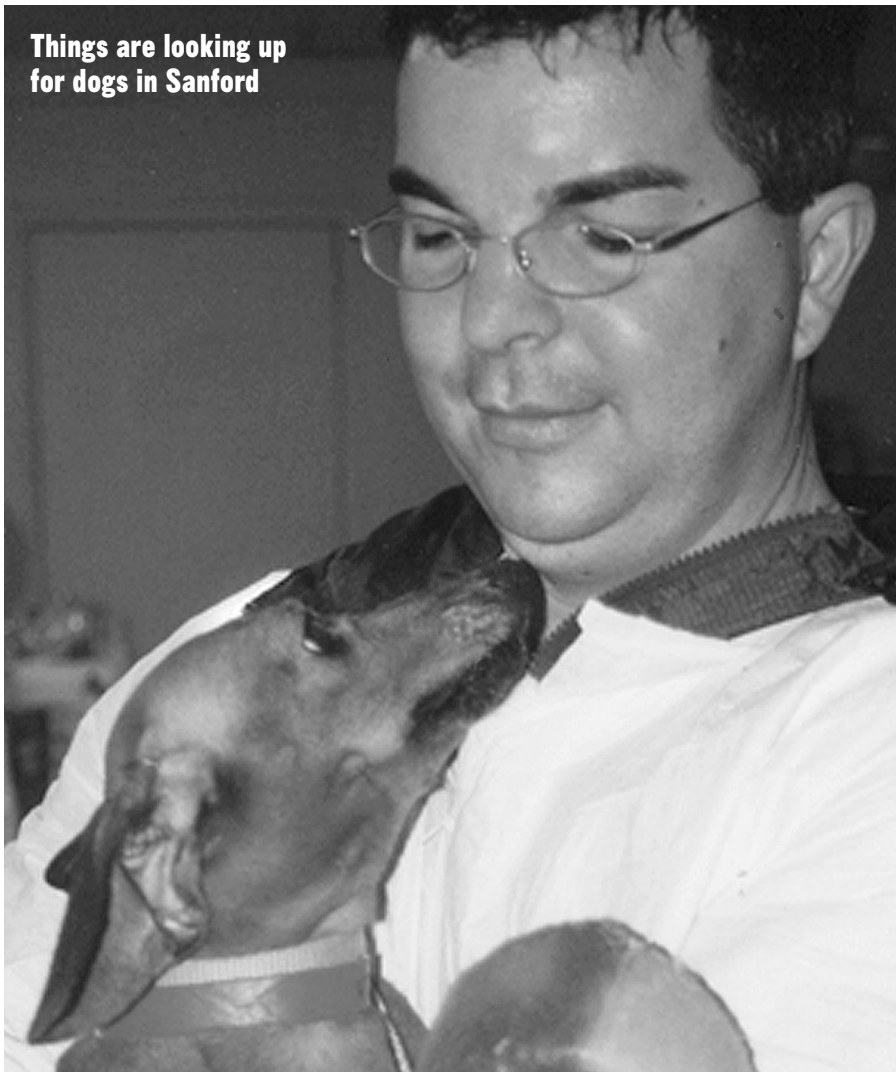
“I was stunned,” one said. “There were 14 dogs in the main house and the floors were covered with piles of old, and fresh, dog feces. Puddles of urine were scattered about the floor. Dogs were eating feces inside the home. There was so much urine and feces that it was difficult to walk in the house without stepping in excrement.”

As the team went from room to room, Barbara and Robert Woodley did not follow, ask about the dogs, or acknowledge their condition. “They acted like there was nothing wrong,” a team member said. During subsequent visits and examinations of the dogs, the tensions between the Woodleys and the vets built. Barbara Woodley was actually convicted of making a threat of serious bodily harm against Dr. Lauren Bartfield, who proved to be a rock-solid witness for the animals.

ALDF was able to help the Sanford animals because of a North Carolina statute unlike any other in the country.

Civil statute Chapter 19A allows private parties such as ALDF to seek civil remedies in cases of animal cruelty. A judge can issue a temporary injunction that allows the animals to receive needed care and, if necessary, remove the animals from cruel conditions. Then, after a non-jury trial, the judge can decide whether to order a permanent injunction which authorizes the removal of the dogs and transfer of ownership to the plaintiff or other appropriate party.

Once the rescue team began removing dogs from the Woodley property, the volunteers and veterinarians were faced with the daunting task



**Things are looking up for dogs in Sanford**

of housing and caring for the animals and getting them the medical and dental attention they needed.

The community's response in North Carolina was, in a word, awesome.

"We answered more than 2,000 emails from people who wanted to help, and continue to answer about 400 a week," said Leighann McCollum, who has worked in animal rescue for about

six years. "Volunteers from almost every rescue group in the area have stepped forward to help."

"I didn't know what I was getting into when I answered the call to care for dogs from a 'pupymill/hoarder' case," volunteer Joan McNamara said. "Some of the dogs had horrendous health problems. I actually shuddered when I

*Continued on next page*



**The dogs of Sanford get in some happy lap time with the Sanford Rescue Project volunteers.**

## Grassroots Effort Delivers a High-Tech Solution

**W**hen more than 100 dogs were removed from the Woodley property last January under ALDF's preliminary injunction, volunteers and veterinarians in Sanford were faced with the daunting task of housing and caring for the animals and getting them the medical and dental attention they desperately needed. A big job – and not enough workers to do the deed.

"In the beginning, before word got out, there were just 10 volunteers pulling 14-hour shifts to care for about 110 animals," volunteer Leighann McCollum said.

But then Sanford Rescue Project Volunteer Coordinator Pat Sanford contacted local CBS affiliate WRAL about the need for rescue help ... and that opened the floodgates. "The volunteers came in from all over North Carolina," said Sanford.

Notices were posted on internet boards, emails started flying back and forth, and the contact person for the rescue was inundated with so many calls on her pager that many calls simply bounced and could not be returned. The rescuers were worried that a lot of valuable volunteer resources were lost. People just showed up when they could.

"On Saturday morning, we might have 50 people, then Saturday night have just two," McCollum said. "I came


home, told my husband, Paul, about it, and he came up with a great idea: an internet schedule and calendar. He created a registration database for people who wanted to foster, for animal care and so forth."

The result is an efficient system that allows three volunteer coordinators from ADORE (Amy Dumas Operation Rescue & Education) to use the volunteer response effectively.

The animals in Sanford are the immediate beneficiaries of the system Leighann and Paul set up, but now animals in other ALDF emergency rescue efforts will benefit as well.

"We will donate the use of the database to ALDF for other rescue efforts where it would be useful, and the ADORE will donate hosting service," McCollum said. "We could immediately get a website up with email and give the new volunteer coordinators access.

"It wouldn't matter where they are in the country. We lost hundreds of volunteers in the first few weeks because we couldn't get info to them or from them and we couldn't organize the ones we had. This will solve that problem for other rescue efforts."

Friends of ALDF can utilize the database for their rescue programs by sending an email to: [info@adoreyourpets.org](mailto:info@adoreyourpets.org). 

## Let Freedom Howl

*continued from previous page*

saw some of them. But now I have seen that I personally can make a difference and can help animals like this. I will continue to be involved after this case is over.”


Melanie Barnes, a retired trauma nurse, lives 90 minutes away. Five days a week she gets up at 6 a.m. to get to the holding facility set up for the dogs. She doesn't leave until 5 p.m.

“I don't know what we would have done without her,” McCollum said.

Most of the volunteers work shifts that run from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. and from 5 to 8 p.m. They meet with the shift coordinators, exchange information on the animals and report any problems they have encountered.

The dogs are kept in large, comfortable crates with blankets and toys at night, then taken out at 7:30 a.m. to exercise pens for frisky play. The volunteers feed them, clean their crates and change their bedding, play with each dog one-on-one, check them over to make sure they are in good condition, and brush them.

“I have never before taken part in an effort like this,” volunteer Deb Bernard said. “When the little animals came out from the Woodley property, I was distraught. It was very difficult, but now that they are beginning to trust us and their health is improving, I realize that it is one of the most rewarding things I have ever done in my life.”

Volunteer Karen Loveless hopes the rest of her state, and country, feel that way. “I hope this case is a message to people that we can stop cruelty,” Loveless said. “We know it's going on. Now we can stop it.” 

*“I have never before taken part in an effort like this. It was very difficult, but now that they are beginning to trust us and their health is improving, I realize that it is one of the most rewarding things I have ever done in my life.”*

—Volunteer Deb Bernard

## How to Spot a Hoarder

**Y**ou remember Vicki Kittles, don't you? Sweet gal. Ran into trouble with the law in Florida in the early 1980s after she was found holed up in her elderly mother's tiny house with more than 40 animals – including two horses – among disgusting piles of feces and dead animals. She took off while being tried on animal neglect charges and ran away from subsequent animal cruelty charges in Colorado and Washington before being found in an abandoned school bus in Oregon with 115 cats and a handful of other animals. After another protracted court trial, she was convicted of 42 misdemeanor counts of animal neglect and sat in jail for more than a year.


Then she took off again ... and settled in Wyoming, where officials brought her up on cruelty charges, taking 48 cats and six horses from her property.

Kittles' case is extreme, but it shows most of the tell-tale signs of an animal hoarder. Things prosecutors and courts should consider:

➤ *Recidivism.* Without legal and psychological intervention, nearly all hoarders continue to collect animals. That's why the explicit court ban preventing the Woodleys from possessing animals for five years (the maximum restriction allowed by law) is so important.

➤ *Poor health and living conditions.* The neglected victims of hoarders usually show obvious signs of distress – emaciation, parasites, dental rot and other illnesses – but do not get taken out of their filthy and chaotic environments to receive veterinary care. One veterinarian said the ammonia in the air inside the Woodley house tested at 40 ppm; by comparison, a pig barn tested at 2 ppm. A Lee County officer said he literally could not step into the Woodley house without landing in feces.

➤ *“Don't take my babies from me.”* Most hoarders sincerely believe they are providing shelter for animals out of a love for their animals, and see themselves as being persecuted by cold-hearted busybodies. Many hoarders make sympathetic defendants, incapable of taking care of themselves or their relatives and living in virtual isolation. This can play on a court's sympathies. “We're not the type of people to mistreat or harm our animals. We've taken in animals that other people would rather shoot in the head or take to the canner, and we made them well,” a defendant told the judge in a 1995 case in Washington. And yet the horses removed from the hoarder's care were emaciated, undernourished and inadequately sheltered. **Real** rescuers provide **real** shelter.

➤ *Do the math.* Taking care of an animal, whether a horse, a dog or a cat, is like raising a child. It takes time, money and effort to provide the food, care, cleaning and attention needed for a healthy existence. When one person raises three cats, that can show a loving heart. But if the number of animals seems unreasonable – it is. 

*Want to learn more about animal hoarding?*

*Visit the ALDF website at [www.aldf.org](http://www.aldf.org)*

## ALDF Joins eScrip Program

ALDF has joined eScrip, a service that enables consumers to use their purchasing power to help educational programs.

Supporters of ALDF can register their credit cards and store cards with eScrip at no cost to them. When they use their cards to purchase goods from local merchants participating in the program, a portion of the money they spend will benefit ALDF's Animal Law Program, which helps to train tomorrow's animal lawyers today.

To register your cards, have them on hand and go to the eScrip Registration Page at: <https://secure.escrip.com/jsp/supporter/registration/step1.jsp>.

When you are asked for the name of the organization you want to have benefit, type in Animal Legal Defense Fund (or next to **Group ID**, type in **157344168**, then press the **Search** key. Select the Animal Legal Defense Fund on the next page, then press **Next** when the next page appears. Next, fill in the basic contact information, then

register all of the cards you want. To find out which merchants in your area honor the eScrip enrollment, go to the Search for Merchants page at: <http://escrip.com/merchants/search/index.jsp>.

That's all there is to it. Next time you use one of your registered cards at a local merchant, a portion of your spending will benefit the animals. Thank you!

## NIFAA Trains Animal Lobbyists

The National Institute for Animal Advocacy was founded in 2002 to help educate animal advocates on effective methods for lobbying locally and regionally for better legal protections for animals. It offers courses in such topics as proactive lobbying; maximizing media and media strategies; and launching a grassroots organization.


For more information about courses or how to get involved, visit the NIFAA website at [www.nifaa.org](http://www.nifaa.org).

## Putting On a Good Case

The National Animal Advocacy Competition, sponsored by the National Center for Animal Law and Harvard Law School's Student ALDF chapter, returned to Harvard Law School in February. Eighteen teams participated in the moot court, along with 12 closing argument competitors. On the left are Harold Anderson and Jami McCubbin of Chapman University School of Law, who took second in the moot court team competition, and moot court winning team members



Kristie Blase and Lynn Deavers of The George Washington University School of Law. Winning the closing argument was Jeff Petersen of Chap-

man (not pictured). All are Student Animal Legal Defense Fund chapter members. ALDF congratulates all of the students who participated. 


# the Animals' ADVOCATE

## Animal Legal Defense Fund

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The Animal Legal Defense Fund is a nonprofit organization funded almost entirely by individual, tax-deductible contributions. If you would like more information about our work, are interested in joining or wish to notify us of a change of address, write to the address above, or call (707) 769-7771.

## IN THIS ISSUE

- Carolina dogs catch a breath of freedom *page 1*
- Meet the Sanford Eight *page 3*
- A Tool for Other Rescues *page 5*
- ALDF joins eScrip *page 7*

## APL Comes Out in Second Edition

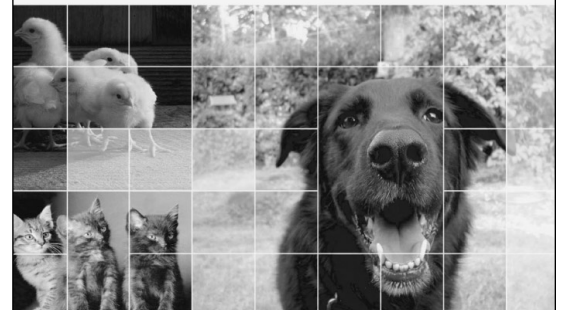
The eagerly awaited compendium “Animal Protection Laws of the United States of America – Second Edition” by ALDF staff attorney Stephan Otto is now available. This compendium is the must-have resource for lawyers, law professors, law students, legislators, other legal professionals, and anyone who want the most comprehensive animal protection laws collection of its kind available.

More than 2,100 pages long, the compendium, features a detailed survey of animal protection and related statutes for all 50 states and the District of Columbia; up-to-date versions of each jurisdiction’s laws; easy navigation; and fully searchable content.

Categories of analysis (in a quick reference table and full-text statutory sections) are: general prohibitions; animals covered by definition; classification of crimes; penalties (including a table of maximum penalties); exemptions; counseling/evaluations; community service; restitution/ reimbursement of costs / bonding & liens; seizure / on-site supervision; forfeiture; cross enforcement

### Animal Protection Laws of the United States of America

Stephan K. Otto • Second Edition



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/ reporting; veterinarian reporting / immunity; law enforcement policies; sexual assault; fighting; and full-text of all referenced statutes.

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