

Burke County Law Enforcement Welcomes Georgia Legal Professionals for Animals and HSUS for Seminar on Prosecuting Animal Cruelty



(WAYNESBORO, Ga) **January 19, 2010** – On Friday, January 15, 2010 in Waynesboro, Georgia Legal Professionals for Animals and the Humane Society of the United States presented Prosecuting Animal Cruelty and Animal Fighting, a three hour seminar providing POST certified and CLE credit to law enforcement and attorneys.

Twenty-five representatives from Burke County law enforcement agencies, the Augusta Circuit District Attorney's office, the Middle Circuit Judiciary, animal control and rescue groups attended. The seminar focused on Georgia animal welfare statues and caselaw, best practices for animal cruelty investigations, the role of veterinarians in animal cruelty prosecutions, search, seizure and impoundment of abused animals, and the connections between domestic violence and animal cruelty.

Highlights of the information presented include:

- **Misdemeanor Animal Cruelty.** Causing death or unjustifiable physical pain or suffering to any animal, even where the harm to the animal is caused by a person's failure to provide care. O.C.G.A. §§ 4-11-16, 16-12-4.
- **Felony Animal Cruelty.** Knowingly and maliciously causing death or physical harm to an animal by rendering a part of such animal's body useless or by seriously disfiguring such animal. O.C.G.A. § 16-12-4(c).
- **Title 4 Inspection Warrants.** These are valuable tools for animal control officers investigating animal cruelty. O.C.G.A. § 4-11-9.2.
- **Child Abuse and Animal Cruelty.** Children present in households where there exists animal abuse face a significant risk of child abuse. These situations should be reported to the Department of Family and Children Services.
- **Battered Women and Animal Cruelty.** Sixty-three percent of abused women remain silent in fear of their abuser retaliating by injuring the family pet. Battered women seeking temporary or permanent placement of a pet so that they can leave a bad situation can call the AHIMSA House hotline for help. (404) 452-6248.

ABOUT GEORGIA LEGAL PROFESSIONAL FOR ANIMALS.

GLPA serves as a forum for the dissemination of information and education on matters relating to animal cruelty laws.



ABOUT HSUS. The Humane Society of the United State works to reduce suffering and to create meaningful social change for animals by advocating for sensible public policies, investigating cruelty and working to enforce existing laws, educating the public about animal issues and conducting hands-on programs that make ours a more humane world.